India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

No official announcement has yet been made as to the course to be adopted by the Front Opposition Bench with reference to the Indian matters which will certainly arise during the debate on the Address. The *Standard*, however, to which one would hardly turn for information as to the plans of Liberals, stated on Monday last that "negotiations are going on between the leaders of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons as to the terms of the amendment to be proposed to the Address in reference to the Indian frontier war. It is understood that the amendment will be moved by Mr. Lawson Walton, Q.C., the member for South Leeds." A plan of this kind would, no doubt, be in accordance with precedent. But, after the campaign of the recess, one would think that the more suitable method on this occasion was for an ex-Minister—say, Mr. Morley, or Mr. Asquith, or Sir Henry Fowler—to move the amendment. It will be remembered also that, according to the announcement made by a news agency on December 26 last, "it is the intention of Sir W. Wedderburn to move an amendment to the Address, condemning the unrighteous and ruinous policy now being pursued both in India and beyond the frontier."

Last Saturday's "reverse" at Mamani, when the troops of the 4th Brigade "became entangled in a gorge" near Shin Kamar, with serious loss, has, in the opinion of Sir William Lockhart and the Calcutta *Englishman*, removed all hope of what is called "a settlement of the Afridi question" without a spring campaign. Sir W. Lockhart, who thinks it doubtful whether the tribesmen will submit this winter, though he believes that "they will surrender on a fresh advance being made," was to have left for England shortly. But it is now reported that he has returned to Peshawar, and will not sail from Bombay until March 5. Our Jingo Press, following the lead of the *Pioneer*, lays the blame for these and the like mischances upon military incompetence on the British side. The unfairness of that excuse was sufficiently exhibited by Colonel Hanna in our columns last week, and it is worth noting that in Sir William Lockhart's opinion, as reported from Calcutta last Monday, "experience is absolutely necessary to prevent a recurrence of similar mistakes in the future," and "the enormous difficulties of the Afridi country have never been properly understood." How much "experience," one wonders, will be required to get rid of those "enormous difficulties"? Or is it too sanguine to hope that the "experience" of the past few months—in which not the least humiliating ingredient has been the savage criticism of British officers and men—will have proved even to the "forward" school wherein the fundamental mistake consists? Meantime, a spring campaign means still more expense, as the Parliamentary Advocates of a British contribution will doubtless note.

A Correspondent writes:—Some surprise has been expressed because of the rapid success of General Bindon Blood's expedition against the Bonerwals, and his comparatively easy march through their fastnesses. This is the more remarkable considering that the Boneirs, and their friends the Yusafzais, pertain to the more stalwart of the Pathan races. They are every way more formidable than the Swatis and Bajauris, who gave the General and his brigadiers so much trouble at the Malakand and Chakdara. Possibly the very large and imposing force as it crossed the passes into Boner, where cultivation in the valleys is good, and the homesteads are fairly comfortable, might induce the grey-beards to advise the younger braves that discretion is sometimes the better part of valour. Yet this does not seem quite sufficient to account for the half-hearted resistance at the Tanga Pass and Rustam on the Western frontier, or for the early submission of the Boneir Jirgahs. There is a further, and very probable, explanation of their speedy acceptance of General Blood's not very exacting terms, which is thus laconically expressed by an officer who has known much of the history of trans-frontier wars. He writes: "This Boneir walk-over business was, I suspect, prudently *rupeed* beforehand; so as to give Lord George the chance of one little crow when Parliament assembles." The surmise may be taken for what it is worth. Anyway, this silvern method is less trying to such humane feelings as we trust still subsist even amongst stay-at-home Jingoes than was the ghastly story of the "lesson" of villages destroyed and grain looted during that Tirah campaign of "punishment" which the Indian Secretary congratulated his constituents upon a fortnight ago. On the other hand, questions arise as to the length of this silver cord by which the Bonerwal headmen are supposed to have been roped in and made submissive. How many thousand tens of rupees did the "political" victory cost? It will not be easy to trace these coins through the accounts; but it is obvious enough that the producers in the plains of India, from whom these scores of thousands of rupees have been squeezed, are all the poorer for what has been squandered beyond the Border amongst the Boneirs.

The Earl of Onslow, who receives from the indigent taxpayers of India a salary of £1,500 sterling per annum as Under Secretary of State for India, continues to devote his time and energy to municipal politics in London—of course, on the side of the monopolies and vested interests. Is there nothing in the present state of affairs in India which is worthy of his serious notice? Or does he think that the best service which he can render to India is to leave her severely alone? In either case he can hardly be said to be earning his official salary.

The Bombay Presidency Association has received the following reply from the Bombay Government to its representation on the subject of the arrest and detention of the Natu brothers:—

Bombay Castle, January 7, 1898.

From S. W. Edgerly, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S., Secretary to Government, Bombay; to the Honorary Secretaries, Bombay Presidency Association.

Gentlemen,—I am desired to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 24, in which you intimate that you have been desired by the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association, for the reasons stated in your letter, to pray that his Excellency the Governor in Council may be pleased to bring the Natu brothers to trial under the ordinary laws.

2. His Excellency the Governor in Council observes that the Council of the Presidency Association are aware of the answer given at the meeting of the Legislative Council of December 20 to an interpellation on this subject; and I am directed to say in reply to your present letter that for the reasons set forth in that answer Government are unable to accede to the prayer of the Council.—I have, etc.,

S. W. Edgerly,
Secretary to Government.

Perhaps Lord G. Hamilton will, in the House of Commons, condescend to become a little more communicative.

A fair illustration of the state of mind which is responsible for the proposed changes in the law of sedition in India was afforded by the *St. James's Gazette*, last Wednes-

day. In a leading article headed "The Indian Native Press," the *St. James's* wrote:—

Lord Elgin's Government will, of course (in spite of recent criticisms), carry out its intention of amending the sections of the Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, which deal with the offence of seditious writing. Our rule in India is a despotism, only tempered by the qualms of the Secretary of State; and when that eminent person and the Viceroy for the time being are happily in accord, the Legislative Council—the official element always predominating—stifles its private opinions and passes an Act accordingly.

And the writer reflected that, "if the Indian Government had addressed itself to the task of restraining the exuberance of Indian journalists at an earlier period, the irritation which is caused by suddenly bringing them to their bearings might have been avoided." The "initial mistake," he thinks, was to permit the liberty of the Press among Indians at all. Now the State "must interfere to protect itself as best it can."

What is most to be regretted is the moral certainty that the transformation of the native Press into a useful organ of Indian public opinion is now next to impossible. A few papers which have always been respectable will pursue the even tenour of their way; but the majority, if they are improved at all, will be improved out of existence.

Contrast with the ill-temper of the *St. James's Gazette*, the judgment of men like Sir Richard Garth and Sir William Markby—the one a former Chief Justice of Bengal, the other a former Judge of the Calcutta High Court. "I can only say," wrote Sir Richard Garth, in February, 1895, "I read native papers myself, week after week, and never see anything there at all approaching sedition or even disloyalty or disrespect to English rule. What I do find there, and what I rejoice to find, is thoroughly well-deserved censure of the arbitrary conduct of many of the Government officials. I am afraid this is exactly what the Government would wish to repress." Similarly, Sir William Markby wrote last July: "I should like to add one word on behalf of the native Indian Press, which is, I think, just now getting more abuse than it deserves. I have for years read regularly extracts from a large number of native newspapers. The criticisms I have met with are sometimes severe, but for the most part respectful. There is occasionally strong 'disapprobation,' but very rarely 'disaffection.'" One would like to know which native papers the writer in the *St. James's* regularly reads. This amateur of despotisms must apparently read a very large number indeed, as he is able confidently to assert that "the majority, if they are improved at all, will be improved out of existence."

When British administrators in India rule with wisdom and some degree of sympathy, they earn gratitude which seems almost to border on adoration. A recent and pleasing example of this spirit was afforded by the people of Bengal, in their dealings with their late Governor, the Hon. Mr. Stevens; another by the people of the North-West Provinces in their dealings with Sir Antony MacDonnell. To an "ovation" which he lately received, Sir Antony replied in these words: "In the goodwill and the gratitude of the people, I find the highest reward and the greatest that I am ever likely to enjoy." Were these words spoken to disaffected and disloyal men?

The *Hindu Patriot* rightly holds that the Famine Commission should "pronounce an emphatic opinion on the question how far the frequency of famines is to be attributed to the growing impoverishment of the masses." But this, it would seem, is just what the Famine Commission will not do. They will revise the Famine Code, and write an excellent report. This will be acknowledged with thanks, and preserved in the pigeon-holes of the India Office. The *locus classicus* upon the matter is to be found in the speech of the Viceroy at Allahabad on December 2, when he said (we quote from the *Pioneer*):—

There is one piece of work which the Government of India still has to do—that is, to make sure that the experience gained will not be forgotten. The famine of this year has been very widespread, and the work in different Provinces has been performed under different conditions. It is therefore an unique opportunity which we do not wish to let slip, and we propose shortly to institute an enquiry, not into the success or failure of the operations—for we maintain that their success has been amply established—not to put anyone on his defence, but to collect and to collate information for the benefit of those who will have to deal with the next famine—may it be far distant—and to enable them to apply to it the experience of the present.

Observe that the Viceroy calmly assumes at least another famine as a matter of course. Of course what is really wanted from the Famine Commission is a series of suggestions for the prevention of famine—not a mere revision, however necessary that may be, of measures for relief. Will Sir James Lyall and his colleagues have the courage and the wisdom to probe beneath the surface?

The *Friend of India and Statesman* passes a stringent criticism upon the eulogy of the famine administration and of Lord George Hamilton by the writer on "Indian Affairs" in the *Times*. Admitting that the famine administration of 1897 compares favourably with that of previous occasions, our contemporary has something to say as to the other side of the picture.

In spite of the strenuous efforts of the Government of India to blink the fact, it is impossible for any unbiassed person to doubt either that the terrible mortality which is officially admitted to have occurred in the Central Provinces implies grievous failure on the part of the administration, or that the failure was largely due to the slowness of the local authorities to realise the true nature of the situation and to the delay which took place in consequence, in the organisation of even moderately effective measures of relief.

In view of these facts, it would have been better for the *Times* to refrain from eulogizing Lord George Hamilton's policy of deferring the appeal to British charity. "It is notorious," says the *Statesman*, "that a large portion of the mortality occurred before any measures of relief worthy of the name were undertaken, or the necessity for them was recognized by the authorities." Besides, was it not Lord Elgin—not Lord George Hamilton—who was primarily responsible for the postponement of the appeal?

With reference to Indian Railway Finance there are one or two points which cannot be too often urged. One of these has to do with the Government of India's methods for developing its trunk lines by means of feeder lines. The Government's practice has been to make over any project for a feeder line to a company, the company raising the capital and the Government building the line and either working the completed undertaking or arranging that it shall be worked by an existing company. After a time the Government buys out the company at a fabulous figure. Now this system combines four distinct disadvantages:—

1. The capital is raised on less favourable terms than the Government could command;
2. Money is needlessly spent in company promoting;
3. A fresh company involves a separate staff, offices, etc., for working a line which could obviously be more economically, not to say more efficiently, worked by the staff of the trunk line upon which the feeder line is entirely dependent for profitable working;
4. A separate railway is planted in the midst of a larger system, and must ultimately be bought out at a price far in excess of what it would have cost the State to build it in the first instance.

One of the most disastrous financial blunders ever made by the Government of India in connexion with the railways was made at the last renewal of the contracts of the Guaranteed Railway Companies (*i.e.*, the G.I.P., the B.B. and C.I., and the Madras Railway). About the year 1875 the Government of India under the original contracts became entitled to purchase these lines, but waived its rights for a second period of twenty-five years in return for certain modifications of the contracts. The Government of India made an extremely bad bargain with the companies, and it has been estimated that by the time the next opportunity for purchase comes round, *i.e.*, about 1900, the total loss to the Government of India by this piece of incompetence will amount to no less than fifty millions sterling. It is only fair to the Indian authorities to say that the India Office in this case acted in direct opposition to their wishes. The chief foolishness in the renewed contracts was the clause which directed that the profits should be computed half-yearly—surplus profits to be divided equally between the Government and the company. Now owing to the seasons, and the periodic movement of grain, one half-year usually works out at a considerable profit, and the other at a far greater loss. The result is that, notwithstanding that the whole year's working is always at a loss, the companies are enabled to pay more than the guaranteed dividend, and the Government of India loses far more than it need under a proper guarantee. Considering that

the lines had been working for twenty-five years at the time of the renewal of the contracts, one can hardly imagine a more stupid mistake on the part of the India Office.

The *Patrika* quotes a passage from the Memoir of the late Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, to illustrate the way in which the Indian people are exploited for the benefit of English merchants. The latter have votes and can exert influence. The former cannot. Sir Arthur Cotton formed a Company in England to organize the canal system of Orissa. It proved a complete failure. "A little time after," says Sir George Campbell, "that happened which usually happens when British capitalists have put their money in losing concerns in India. People in London bullied and abused the Government to get the concern taken over, and eventually they were successful. The Government paid out the Company in full with an additional bonus." And a tax—the P. W. Cess—has been imposed on the people of Bengal chiefly in order to pay the interest of the money thus sunk by the Government. No wonder the people of India ask for a share in the administration.

We take the following from the *Madras Standard*:

> The Mysore Representative Assembly is doing good work. It has of late manifested increased activity, and doubtless such activity is fruitful of much good. The Resolutions of the representative members published by us last week are proof positive of the public spirit which the Representative Assembly is gradually developing. It has already become a recognised power in the State, and it is a matter for congratulation that the members of the Representative Assembly are becoming more and more alive to the necessity of suggesting reforms.

When will the British Government in India be prepared to follow this high example of good government set by a native State? One would think that representation was even more needed in provinces ruled by aliens than in a State ruled by its own native ruler.

Sir W. Harcourt said in a recent speech at Dundee: "If the Colonies to-day are self-reliant, if they are contented, if they are loyal, it is because they received the priceless boon of self-government." These words have been widely read in India, and the criticism of the *Hindu* of Madras may be commended to the authorities:

> The natives of India, amidst the vicissitudes of successive foreign conquests, have always been accustomed to self-government—the tax-gathering empires which preceded British rule never interfered with the autonomous system of administration to which the people have been accustomed through long centuries.

This is literally true. Through centuries of Mahometan rule and successive invasions, rural India continued to administer its own concerns, either through village communes, or through hereditary local chiefs or landlords. That system was the saving of India. When one talks about India as not yet ready for a moderate measure of self-government, one forgets that India had a complete system of self-government until it was overthrown in this century.

Financial arrangements in India between the Imperial Government and the Provincial Governments take the shape of a five-yearly contract. The Provincial Governments raise the taxes, and hand over part of the revenue to the Government of India for Imperial expenses, retaining the remainder for provincial and administrative purposes. The proportion is fixed once every five years. The obvious weakness of the system is that the great spending department—the Imperial Government—has not the trouble of collecting taxes; it has only to demand an ever-increasing share of the provincial revenues in order to indulge its weakness for frontier wars, while the provincial administration is starved. Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea has done well to call attention to the wastefulness of this system. In a controversy with Mr. Stephen Jacob, Financial Secretary to the Government of India, Mr. Surendra Nath shows that "from all parts of the country—from Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and the North-Western Provinces—comes the same complaint, that the funds are absolutely inadequate to meet the growing requirements of a progressive community." He refers to the complaints made by Provincial Governors like Sir Charles Elliott, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and Sir Antony Macdonnell, and cites the remarks of the late Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Mr. Stevens, in the Vice-regal Council. "Provincial finance," said Mr. Stevens, "has been so crippled by the provincial contract of 1897, that the salaries of Ministerial servants, which were fixed long ago, cannot be raised, the lower ranks of the police cannot be adequately paid, and the claims of sanitation cannot be properly attended to; and that, too, at a time when the country is menaced with the plague."

According to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the lives lost in the terrible cyclone at Chittagong numbered at least 10,000 or 12,000. In one village, out of 3,000 souls only 90 remained after the catastrophe. This appalling calamity reminds one of the great cyclone and storm-wave of 1876, which swept away over a hundred thousand people from the south-east corner of Bengal—from Noakhali and Backergunj. On the morning after the occurrence the country affected was like a vast field of battle—dead bodies strewed the ground, floated on tanks and rivers, and even hung on trees to which they had been carried by the wave. We have no doubt that the Local Government will afford all the relief needed on the present occasion. The resources of India are rightly devoted to the relief of her distressed population. They are wrongly squandered upon needless wars beyond the frontier.

We are glad to see that Mr. Chandravarkar has asked in the Bombay Legislative Council whether Government was aware of the fact that the quarantine rules in some places in Bombay observed distinctions of race. The reply was, however, evasive. It bears the hall-mark of bureaucracy. His Excellency the Governor said: "There has never been any intention to exempt Europeans who are liable to carry infection." When two thousand inhabitants of Poona complained to the Government about specific acts of alleged oppression in the administration of the plague measures of last year, the reply was that the methods and intentions of the Government were good. So they were, no doubt. But is it not sometimes wise to look into facts? Does not the Spanish proverb tell us what it is that is paved with good intentions?

We dealt last week with the general business of the Social Conference. The session was opened by Mr. Justice Ranade with an address of striking comprehensiveness, balanced restraint, and warm humanity. Mr. Ranade insisted on the fundamental importance of inner change. "The plan of reviving the ancient usages and customs," he truly said, "will not work our salvation, and is not practicable." Society is a living organism; the dead elements are gone, and cannot be revived. The only alternative that remains open to sensible people is reformation. But "it is not the outward form, but the inward form—the thought and the idea which determines the outward form—that has to be changed if real reformation is desired."

> Now what have been the inward forms or ideas which have been hastening our decline during the past three thousand years? These ideas may be briefly set forth as isolation, submission to outward force or power more than to the voice of the inward conscience, perception of factitious differences between men and men, and due to heredity and birth, a passive acquiescence in evil or wrong-doing, and a general indifference to secular well-being, almost bordering upon fatalism. These have been the root ideas of our social system. They have, as their natural result, led to the existing family arrangements, where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man, and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity. All the evils we seek to combat flow from the prevalence of these ideas. They are mere corollaries to these axiomatic assumptions.

Now, in order to remove these evils, "we must accustom ourselves and others to worship and reverence new ideals." In place of isolation, there must be fraternity, or rather elasticity, or expansiveness, or cohesiveness in society.

> Increase your circle of friends and associates, slowly and cautiously if you will, but the tendency must be to turn our face towards a general recognition of the essential equality between man and man. That will beget sympathy and power. It will strengthen your own hands by the sense that you have numbers with you, and not against you, or, as you foolishly imagine, below you. The next idea which lies at the root of our helplessness is that we were always intended to remain children, to be subject to outside control, and never to rise to the dignity of self-control by making our conscience and our reason the sole guides to our conduct.

The new idea which should take the place of the old is "not the idea of rebellion and independence and overthrow of all authority, but that of freedom responsible to God alone." "Reverence all human authority, pay your respects to all prophets and revelations, but subordinate reverence to the divine command in us." The summary of statistics of progress, which Mr. Justice Ranade sets forth in his address, is extremely interesting and full of hope.

THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

PARLIAMENT re-assembles on Tuesday next, and it is inevitable that a large part of the debate on the Address should have to do with the policy of repression within and of aggression without the frontiers of India, upon which the Government of India, with the sanction and sympathy of Lord G. Hamilton, lightly embarked last summer. For our part, we are by no means sure that the policy of internal repression, which began with the deportation of the Natu brothers and has culminated in the proposed changes in the law of sedition, is not intrinsically of more importance and urgency than the "forward" frontier policy. The latter is more palpable. It obtains more space in the newspapers. It is more talked about in this country. But perhaps for these very reasons it stands less in need of the close attention of Parliament. The *Standard*, indeed, taking its cue from the confident predictions of Lord G. Hamilton and Mr. Curzon, announced a few days ago that "the first calm interchange of opinion between the two Front Benches of the House of Commons" would dispose of all troublesome questions about frontier policy. There is something no doubt in the recent speeches, and still more in the recent silence, of some ex-Ministers to encourage this belief. But it is inconceivable that Sir William Harcourt, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Asquith, Sir Henry Fowler, and Mr. Bryce, after their vigorous and repeated denunciations in the country of the policy which led to the present war, will remain silent or adopt a *piano* tone in the House of Commons. "I believe," said Mr. John Morley at Forfar, on October 4 last, "I believe there is nothing on which Liberals ought to set their hearts more firmly than resistance—strong resistance—to what is called the 'forward' policy." Mr. Morley added that the principles and the policy of the Liberal party in the matter were the principles and the policy of Lord Lawrence. More recently, Sir H. Fowler dotted the i's and crossed the t's of this declaration when he said that the duty of Liberals was to resist the "forward" policy "however disguised." Other ex-Ministers have spoken no less decisively, and it may, therefore, one would think, be safely assumed that, whether the particular amendment to the Address be moved below the gangway or above it, the Liberal Front Bench will permit itself something a little more thoroughgoing than a "calm interchange of opinion." It is true, of course, that in any debate upon the "forward" policy Liberal ex-Ministers, as distinguished from the Liberal rank and file, must to some extent appear in the position of defendants. We shall probably, for example, hear a good deal about the ill-starred and deplorable Durand Mission during the coming debate. But it is one thing deliberately to initiate a policy and to press it forward with zeal on every possible occasion; it is another thing to be led astray by the unsuspected strength of permanent officialdom and to err through ignorance.

The real danger is not that the debate may not come on, or that it may lack vigour, but that criticism may fail to put the real points in the foreground. There will be every temptation, and plenty of motive, for discursive argument. What is urgently wanted is that the critics of the Government's policy should go at once to the root of the matter, which is twofold. There is (1) the question of a contribution from the British Exchequer to the cost of the recent and present operations; and there is (2) the question of future frontier policy. We deal below with (1) the question of payment. But it may be well to recall here the condition, as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, under which alone the British Treasury will contribute. "Can India bear the expense?" Sir Michael Hicks Beach asked at Bristol on December 10:—

> That is a matter which I can assure you is at present under the careful examination of her Majesty's Government. . . . . If in our judgment the financial condition of India requires it, we shall not hesitate to ask the British Parliament to come to the aid of India.

Sir Michael, and Lord George Hamilton, have since declared that the financial condition of India does *not* require it. But as to that there are at least two observations to be made: namely, (*a*) that "a complete and thorough examination" of the financial condition of India does not bear out this comfortable theory; and *b*) that the real question is, not whether India *can* pay, but whether India *ought* to pay, the whole of the bill. Here let us recall the admirable and significant remarks of Sir Henry Fowler (at Wolverhampton, November 20):

> We have yet to deal with the cost of the present war. What that cost is I don't know, but, if it approaches the figures I have seen, the Indian revenue cannot meet it, and *I go further and say it ought not to be asked to meet it.* (Loud cheers.) Parliament in 1880 resolved to contribute five millions towards the cost of the Afghan War. *The reasons which justified that vote are more forcible to-day than they were then.* To throw upon India, in addition to the enormous cost and loss of the famine and the plague, the entire cost of the present war, would be an injustice which would rankle in every part of the Indian Empire. (Hear, hear.)

In other words, it is the duty of British taxpayers to contribute at least a portion of the cost of a policy which is essentially British. We hope that that line of argument, and no other, will be strongly insisted upon during the coming debate so far as the financial question is concerned. India does not ask for a charitable dole. She asks for a small and tardy instalment of mere justice.

To turn now to the question (2) of future frontier policy, one finds here a remarkable tendency, even on the part of eminent Liberal statesmen, to pursue shadows and overlook the real issue. Such is the astuteness of the India Office—such the innocence even of old Parliamentary hands. Let us cite once more the official formula for the future, as stated by Lord G. Hamilton (Acton, November 10) and reiterated by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Curzon:—

> In the first place, let us concentrate our strength and attention on those routes and positions only which are essential to the fulfilment of our obligations, and thus avoid dispersion of forces and annexation of territory.

Or, in Mr. Curzon's catchpenny phrase, what the India Office and the Simla clique desire is "not heedless annexation but pacific control." In these circumstances, the first duty of Liberals is to cease flogging a dead horse and drop all talk of "annexation." Their task is to resist the "forward" policy "however disguised"—and a very specious and clever disguise it will be in the final form in which it is entrusted to Lord George Hamilton for the edification of Parliament and the constituences. We shall be asked to retain essential "routes and positions." Precisely. For, as Colonel Hanna truly says, "the official programme of the forward party in India has always been posts and roads and no annexation." Even the *Pioneer*, in its most recent issue to hand, is indignant at the pains which our "great, wise and eminent" statesmen take to avoid the real issue. Here is what the *Pioneer* (January 14) says:—

> The controversy on the vexed problem of the future settlement of the frontier continues to be conducted by the statesmen of both parties in England with about as much intelligence as the Tibetan saint requires to spin his prayer-wheel. The spokesmen of either parties have learnt by heart a few facts or hypotheses which serve their purpose on the platform, and they continue to repeat them with a parrot-like iteration, and without the smallest appreciation of the real points at issue. Mr. Balfour in this respect is no better than the rest. It does not help us in the least at this time of day, *vis à vis* of the present complications and the actualities of Indian finance, to remind us that we must have command of the main routes into Afghanistan, and that in certain contingencies we should require to assist the Amír. What we really wish to determine is whether the routes cannot be kept open by some other method than the absorption of tribal territory or the establishment of posts within that territory, since it is plain that in the other event we must ultimately be driven to occupy up to the Durand line, and the cost of such a policy is apparently prohibitive so far as India is concerned. Politicians at home either don't realise, or they refuse to state these alternatives, preferring to speak in a vague way which seems to hint at the practicability of a sort of makeshift half-and-between policy. The only result will be, if the Government of India and the Secretary of State take their cue accordingly, that a half-and-between policy will in the end be adopted, and we shall blunder on blindly at an even greater cost than if the "forwards" had won the day, and the budget of expenditure had been provided for at once.

The tone of the *Pioneer* is not exactly deferential. But its statement of the case is in the direction of accuracy. We say "in the direction of" because of course the fundamental question is not even "whether the routes cannot be kept open by some other method than the absorption of tribal territory or the establishment of posts within that territory," but—what have we to do with keeping these particular routes open at all? In plain English, the question is—Is not India's natural triple frontier of river, desert and mountain good enough? It was good enough for Lord Lawrence and, according to Mr. Morley's statement, it is good enough for the whole Liberal party. In

opposition to this policy the "forward" party advocates what we have called "the policy of the occupation of Chitral squared and raised to the power of ten." The issue between the two is clear, and the overwhelming bulk of expert testimony is against the policy of occupation. We trust that the opponents of the "forward" school—and those opponents include many of the best men in the Tory party—will fight the matter out on these lines. Victorious or defeated, they will then, at any rate, place in a clear light the nature of the "forward" policy, stripped of all disguise. And—unless they positively desire to play into the hands of the enemy—they will shun the word "annexation" as they would shun the plague.

THE CASE FOR AN IMPERIAL CONTRIBUTION.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH announced at Bristol, on January 19, that "the Indian Government did not consider it necessary that any financial help should be given by this country to India at the present time." Many people were a little astonished to hear that the Government of India—which in recent years has haunted, and still continues to haunt, the loan market—was such a stickler for sound financial policy (as was more than hinted by the speaker) that it declined a proffered Imperial grant to relieve a country suffering from the accumulated ills of war, pestilence, and famine. Some (encouraged by the *Pioneer*) think that in this self-denying policy the Indian authorities are not so much financial purists as unfaithful stewards, who fear that "complete and thorough examination" of their stewardship which the Chancellor of the Exchequer attached as a brutal condition to the proposed monetary assistance. Be these things as they may, there are two very simple questions involved, which it will be one of the first duties of Parliament to consider. These two questions are: (1) Ought India in any case, and without reference to her financial condition, to be called upon to pay the whole cost of the recent and present operations beyond the frontier, which are merely the latest phase in a long and costly Imperial enterprise? and (2), Can it be reasonably said, under the circumstances, that India does not need financial help at the present time? We propose to address ourselves shortly to these two points only, setting out the facts without comment, so that members of the House of Commons may have in their hands some trustworthy data upon which to base their conclusions when Parliament is asked to pronounce its decision.

If in the last twenty years Canada, or Australia, or Cape Colony, had had to expend £75,000,000 sterling in military operations and preparations on strictly Imperial policy, over and above a rapidly increasing yearly expenditure on defence, can anyone doubt that such expenditure would have been largely defrayed by the Imperial Exchequer? In the last twenty years India has spent Rx. 75,000,000 (=in India £75,000,000) on and beyond the North-West frontier. This is no fanciful estimate. Facing page 78 in a little book by Colonel H. B. Hanna, ("Indian Problems" No. III. Archibald Constable & Co.) is a table setting out with full official references the details of an expenditure of Rx. 71,458,000 on the forward policy on and beyond the North-West frontiers of India from 1878-1896. To this amount must now be added at least Rx 3,500,000—the latest official estimate for the recent operations to the end of 1897. Here is a summary of this table:

	Rx.
Afghan War 1878-80	22,300,000
Military Railways..	16,400,000
Quetta 1885	2,300,000
Special Defence Works	3,000,000
Increase in Army 1886	16,300,000
Chitral Campaign..	2,150,000
Subsidies to Amir and tribes ..	2,300,000
Other expenditure..	6,750,000
	71,500,000
Operations 1897 (say)	3,500,000
	Rx. 75,000,000

And this is by no means all. These figures are official estimates—official admissions. There is all the injury inflicted upon India by the diversion of official energies into these unprofitable channels—an injury impossible to estimate, but none the less serious on that account. Such, then, is the officially recognised cost to India of twenty years of the forward policy. The principle of an Imperial contribution to this "frontier" policy of the India Government was accepted eighteen years ago, when five millions sterling were contributed by the English Exchequer to the cost of the Afghan War. If that grant was right and proper then, can it be contended that a similar grant would be a departure from sound financial policy to-day? If the frontier policy of the Indian Government was held to be of Imperial moment then, how has it ceased to be of Imperial moment now?

The second point to which we wish to draw attention is India's financial need. It is not the opponents of the forward policy who base the expediency or inexpediency of an Imperial contribution to Indian revenues for Imperial purposes upon any question of India's ability to bear the financial burden. But since our latter-day Imperialists have taken this lower ground, it may be well to examine the plea which has been put forward in this connexion. Let us attempt to form a reasonable estimate of India's probable financial position at the end of the current financial year—*i.e.*, on March 31, 1898. According to the last Financial Statement the matter stood thus for the two years 1896-7 and 1897-8—years, it must be repeated, of war, pestilence and famine:—

	Rx.
Revised Estimate 1896-7 Deficit ..	1,987,000
Budget Estimate 1897-8 ,, ..	2,464,000
Total deficit in the two years	Rx. 4,451,000

This accumulated deficit was the work of the Famine. Apart from heavy losses of revenue, the actual outlay on Famine Relief was estimated at Rx. 2,013,000 for 1896-7, and at Rx. 3,666,000 for 1897-8; total, Rx. 5,679,000. But all these figures need revision in the light of later facts and estimates. In Indian Finance the Closed Accounts are usually more favourable than the Revised Estimate. On the other hand the latest official estimate of the expenditure on Famine Relief for 1896-7 agrees with the figures given above and puts it at Rx. 2,000,000. We shall probably not be very wide of the mark if we assume that the final deficit for 1896-7 works out at Rx. 1,750,000. For 1897-8, the latest estimate of expenditure on Famine Relief (made as at December 31, 1897, by Mr. T. W. Holderness of the N.-W. P.) shows a large addition to the Budget Estimate—Rx. 5,500,000, instead of Rx. 3,666,000, or an increase of Rx. 1,834,000. Against this may be set an unexpected improvement in certain heads of revenue, due to the good harvest and a considerable increase in railway receipts partly from this cause and partly from the military operations beyond the North-West frontier. In order not to over-state the case for the Indian tax-payer, one may assume that these improvements balance the increased expenditure on Famine Relief. The next disturbing cause is Exchange. The rate assumed in the Budget for 1897-8 was Rs. 16·6=£1 for drawings up to £13,000,000. Up to the present, £6,000,000 have been drawn at an average rate of rather less than Rs. 16=£1, while all indications point to the remaining £7,000,000 [or £8,000,000 according to the latest requirements] being remitted at a rate approximating to Rs. 15=£1. This state of exchange represents a very considerable gain to Indian revenues, if we take into account also Exchange Compensation Allowance and the sterling pay of the British troops. Again, we will make a liberal estimate and assume that the Indian Treasury benefits under this head to the extent of Rx. 1,000,000. The last and most serious disturbing cause is the war beyond the frontier. The latest official estimate for the war up to the end of 1897 is no less than Rx. 3,500,000. We are now in a position to form some idea of the probable position at the end of next March. We may tabulate the figures we have given above as follows:—

	Rx.
Revised Estimate, 1896-7, Deficit	1,987,000
Assumed Improvement	237,000
Probable Final Deficit, 1896-7 ..	1,750,000

Budget Estimate, 1897-8, Deficit ..		Rx. 2,464,000
	Rx.	
Add—Increase on Famine Relief	1,834,000	
,, For Frontier War ..	3,500,000	
	5,334,000	
Deduct—Improvement in Revenue	1,834,000	
,, ,, Exchange	1,000,000	
Net increase to Deficit ..	2,500,000	
		2,500,000
Probable Deficit, 1897-8		Rx. 4,964,000

The final result is that in all probability Indian accounts will show for the two years, 1896-7 and 1897-8, an accumulated deficit of about Rx. 6,750,000, of which the cost of the Frontier war, *only to the end of* 1897, accounts for more than half. Under these circumstances can it be contended that the Indian taxpayer—who is not troubled with correct views about *la haute finance*—as distinguished from the India Government, is in no need of financial assistance? When, too, that financial assistance is claimed, not as a dole to a beggar, but as a just contribution to joint expenditure incurred by a struggling partner in a joint undertaking, surely the further fact of pressing financial need, rendered pressing by this very expenditure, is one which adds urgency to the claim for relief.

THE POLICY OF INTERNAL REPRESSION.

WHILE there is much scope for the discussion of Indian affairs, within as well as beyond the frontier, there are at least three matters which are specially urgent. And not only are these three matters urgent, but it has to be expressly recognized that urgency includes not simply prompt handling, but also very serious and full examination, to be followed by prompt and decisive action. Even on the broad question of external policy, with all the advantage of the delusive question-begging epithet "Forward," the country is awakening at last to the uneasy, if not somewhat irritated, suspicion that it has been befooled by the vapouring of officialism. But it is no less important, in view of the issues at stake, that there should be a further awakening to critical difficulties of internal administration. The cruel thing is that, once any real investigation is made in the broad light of parliamentary discussion, it must be found that every one of the acute troubles perplexing the Government and agitating the community is largely due to the inconsiderate and panic-stricken action of the Government itself. If the mischief is probed to the bottom, the ghastly fact will be clearly revealed to the English people that the present administration of India, belauded and glorified as it has been and is, nevertheless and in solemn truth is based upon foundations that are dangerously insecure. One need not now labour the point. One simply repeats, with the emphasis of grave anxiety, that the administration is out of touch with the people. There is nothing to be hoped for from the ignorance, shallowness, and lack of sense of responsibility displayed in the highest quarters. Our appeal is addressed to ordinary members of Parliament, Conservative as well as Liberal, whose patriotism, if biassed this way or that in point of expression, is nevertheless not hopelessly warped by the trammels of officialism. If India is to be saved—nay, if India is to be creditably administered—the futilities of party must give way to the claims of patriotism and of humanity.

We say, then, in the first place, that the case of the brothers Natu is urgent. On July 27, the Natus were suddenly deported from their homes in Poona, and their property, landed and moveable, was attached by the Government of Bombay. This high-handed action had previously been sanctioned by the Secretary of State. Now, why? Such an exceptional exercise of official power would startle the most stolid community, and throw every man into doubt and alarm lest his turn should come next. Why were the Natus deported in this sudden and clandestine manner, without being brought to trial in open court in the usual order of legal process? Lord George Hamilton found it necessary to offer some explanation to the House. In the debate on the Indian Budget (August 5) he said:

> A certain knot of persons in Poona set themselves to malign Mr. Rand and his coadjutors. The murders were perpetrated, and they were cold-blooded murders, carefully thought out and deliberately planned. They were not the deeds of a fanatic smarting under some sense of supposed wrong. . . . . Everybody, he thought, would admit that the persons who committed these crimes ought to be brought to justice. . . . . The two native gentlemen who had been arrested were notorious men, and this was not the first time that they had been brought before the notice of the public. He believed that the authorities of Bombay were within their rights in the action they had taken, and that the result of the proceedings would be to unravel the plot that had been formed.

Now, if the Natus perpetrated or instigated these murders, every right-minded person would be pleased to see them hanged as high as Haman. But such hanging must be in execution of a judicial sentence. Why have they not been put on their trial? Why not "unravel the plot" without all this delay? Evidently the Natus were arrested in order that the Government might be able "to unravel the plot." Unfortunately for the Government theory, however, Damodar Chapekar Deccani came forward and confessed that he had committed the murders. This was reported on October 4. Four months have elapsed, and still there is no word of a trial, and the Natus have been more than six months in close custody. Lord George Hamilton had the courage to designate the Natus as "notorious" men. How were they notorious? If the younger brother was tried on a charge of rioting, still he was acquitted. The elder brother is well known for his intelligent activity in good social works, as evidenced amply by his letters on the plague administration printed in our November issue. The hasty attempt to prejudice the Natus recoils on Lord George Hamilton himself. The antiquated Regulation XXV., of 1827, undoubtedly empowers Government for certain reasons of State summarily to arrest and imprison persons believed to be guilty of specified offences, and to attach and seize their lands. The Regulation, however, was clearly intended for turbulent and difficult times, and it is simply an engine of oppression in a time of "profound peace." But there is no statutory power to seize the personal property, and perhaps the official discovery of this fact, more than the difficulties of the joint family arrangement, has induced the Government to restore this portion of its confiscations. Has the personal property actually been restored? And how about compensation for its illegal seizure? If Chapekar's confession be true—and that ought to have been ascertained long before now—then the cause of the Poona murders was precisely not what the Government imagined, and precisely what it was certain it was not. In that case, the murders were "the deeds of a fanatic smarting under some sense of supposed wrong," and the deportation of the Natus and their prolonged detention constitute a shockingly arbitrary exercise of high-handedness. It is for the House of Commons to see to it that the Natus be at once either released and compensated or brought to trial.

A second case of urgency is the case of Mr. Tilak. Though Mr. Tilak may steadfastly suffer his imprisonment, that is no reason why others should not move in his behalf. Even if we assume that he was justly convicted, there still remains the question of policy, as distinguished from the question of legality. There is no earthly use in a law that operates in such fashion as to arouse the amazement and indignation of three hundred millions of people. Mr. Tilak's punishment instead of debasing and confounding him, has elevated him into a hero and a martyr. Whatever the established legal procedure, there are to be considered these striking facts: (1) that Mr. Tilak's action as regards the famine administration was intensely resented by the officials; (2) that the murders threw Government into a state of feverish, even panic, activity, not of necessity wisely directed; (3) that Mr. Tilak was tried not in Poona, but in Bombay; (4) that, in consequence of this, neither judge nor counsel nor the European jurors understood a word of the incriminated language; (5) that the Indian jurors, who did understand both the language and the circumstances of its use, were unanimous for his acquittal; and (6) that the summing-up of the judge, who is a man of but limited experience, has been widely pronounced by experienced lawyers to have been distinctly unfair. Mr. Justice Strachey condemned Mr. Tilak to rigorous imprisonment. When one considers Mr. Tilak's mode of life, this must be seen to bear upon him with great, if

not, possibly, fatal severity. In all probability, it will mark him for life. It would be some sign of grace in the Government if it would even reduce his punishment to simple imprisonment. Even that would be hard enough measure for a political offence in a period of "profound peace" on the part of a man who had everything to lose and nothing to gain by political disturbance. Indeed, it would be the wisest act of Government for many a day to open freely to Mr. Tilak his prison doors.

The third urgent matter is the newfangled law of sedition. This subject we have treated very fully in recent numbers, so that little need be said of it now. When we spoke last week of the Government as deliberately sitting down on the safety-valve, we used a familiar illustration of obvious significance. If it is an explosion that the Government desires, it is going the best way to obtain it, and there is nothing more to be said. If it is burning to cover itself with ridicule, it is in a fair way to succeed in its purpose. But patriotic gentlemen of the House of Commons, Conservative as well as Liberal, are not likely to enjoy the spectacle of the representatives of British Government in India exhibiting themselves in masquerade, or stooping to the indignity of mean reprisal. What does the average member think of the Great British Government of India bringing its force to bear upon an obscure editor who draws an income of Rs. 3 per week from his little sheet in some unheard-of taluka? Are we going to turn a 110-ton gun upon an occasional fly for its cheeky assaults upon our respected nose? The fact that not only the native papers, but the Anglo-Indian editors, have openly displayed their sense of the unreasonableness, as well as of the danger, of the proposed recasting and the proposed enforcement of the Law of Sedition in India, ought to have some meaning even for Lord George Hamilton. It will not be lost upon any member of the House who exercises the right of private judgment. Party loyalty will bear a severe strain. It will hardly drag a thinking man to make a fool of himself. Anything more foolish than the action of Government in the three cases to which we have been limiting our immediate attention, it would be difficult even for officialism to conceive. In all seriousness, is it not high time for Government to turn over a new leaf? The proceedings in regard to these three matters, like many other proceedings, "are certainly not calculated to bridge the ever-widening gap of hostility, which is now becoming so apparent, and which every lover of India should do his utmost to lessen."

ANOTHER TURN OF THE SCREW.

THE tinkering of the Criminal Procedure Code, X of 1882, now in progress at Calcutta, is a far more serious business than it looks. The Criminal Procedure Bill, XVII of 1897, goes much beyond mere consolidation and the definitive expression of the law on points where decisions conflict. The Indian Association of Calcutta, in an excellent Note on the Bill, justly points out that "it represents a marked expansion in directions which public opinion must note with much concern." It will at once be seen, from what the Association indicates, that the language it uses does not err on the side of extravagance:

> The Bill adds to the powers of the police, and invests with the authority to arrest a class of men who hitherto did not possess such authority; it confirms and adds to the discretionary power of magistrates; and it curtails the jurisdiction of the High Court. In truth, the Bill proposes to arm the magistrate and the police with greater powers of repression, and to place the accused in a worse position than what he now occupies under the Criminal Procedure Code. Seeing that executive and judicial functions are too often combined in the same officer, it follows that to strengthen the hands of the magistrate and of the police is to arm the executive with larger powers of repression; and to curtail the jurisdiction of the High Court at the same time is to reduce the chances of correcting mistakes committed by magistrates, who, being executive officers possessing judicial powers, will too often be tempted to subordinate their conduct as judicial officers to their paramount duty as executive officers, responsible for the peace of the districts or sub-districts under their charge.

This restrained and matter-of-fact statement shows a sufficiently grave situation, and unhappily the points made by the Association are amply borne out by a perusal of the Bill. There are, indeed, one or two new provisions that seem likely to be improvements on the existing law, but they cannot be put in the balance against the obnoxious provisions criticised by the Association.

The Bill adds to the powers of the police. Thus, the new sub-section (3) of Section 54 provides that "the local Government may direct that the provisions of this Code relating to arrests without warrant shall apply to village policemen or chaukidars, with any modification that it may think fit." Now this is not only an extension of powers, but an extension of powers to men who have certainly not proved themselves fit to be entrusted with them. This plain objection is set forth pointedly in a series of "suggestions" forwarded to Government by the Legal Practitioners' Association of Ahmedabad:—

> The proposed amendment gives large powers to village policemen and chaukidars, who are servants of Government on very low pay, and are mostly illiterate and are likely to share the party-feelings and prejudices which are generally acute in villages. It is impossible to believe they can have anything like an adequate idea of their responsibilities while exercising their powers, which are very likely to be frequently abused.

Besides, what facts can be adduced to show that there is any necessity whatever for so far-reaching an amendment? Under sub-section (3) of Section 61 of the Bill, a village chaukidar may apparently detain a prisoner in custody as long as he likes! Again, Section 162 is proposed to be amended so as to make general law of a ruling of a majority of the Allahabad High Court, led with great decision by Chief Justice Edge, the effect of which would be to exclude a prisoner on trial from access to the statements made to the police in the course of an investigation. The Calcutta High Court holds the other way. The *Pioneer* ridicules "the fetish of a first information," but the *Times of India*, in an able article (December 1, 1897) on the Allahabad case of *Imp.* v. *Mannu*, emphatically declared that it would "view with grave alarm and disapproval any amendment of the existing law along the lines of the judgment" in that case. Both the Indian Association and the Ahmedabad Legal Practioners' Association strenuously support the same view. The grounds are obvious. The prisoner ought to know definitely and at once what is alleged against him—not only for the general purposes of his defence, but also for the specific and most important purpose of nailing the police down and preventing the too familiar variation and improvement of the police case as a trial proceeds. The magistrate, too, is entitled to "send for the Diary" and "use it to aid him in his enquiry," of course behind the back of the accused. Why all this secrecy? One would imagine that the object of enquiry was, not to discover the truth, but to convict the prisoner at all hazards. This provision of the Bill is merely monstrous.

Under Section 110, the magistrate is invested with powers which, as the Indian Association says, "may well excite apprehension and alarm." The section deals with security for good behaviour from habitual offenders. There is no provision to limit the amount, either when fixed by subordinate magistrates or with due regard to the circumstances of the case or the position of the accused. Should the security demanded be beyond the ability of the accused, the man may be kept in gaol for any term up to three years. First, there is the "discretion" of the notoriously indiscreet chaukidar, and then there is the opinion, biassed or unbiassed, of the magistrate. "A new terror," says the Indian Association, "would thus be created for those who take part in public affairs in the Mofussil. The Strachey law of sedition is a sufficient deterrent. The present provision will make their situation desperate." Under Section 191, the law is altered so as to deprive the accused of his existing right of requiring the transfer of the case to another magistrate or its committal to the Court of Session at any point later than the opening of the evidence. Clearly, the right ought to remain with the accused up to the moment of entering on his defence. "Indeed," says the Indian Association, "it is often very difficult to understand, before the actual process of recording evidence has begun, whether and to what extent the magistrate, in a case like this"—a case where the magistrate is practically the prosecutor, proceeding on information received from any person other than a police officer, or on his own knowledge or suspicion—"has identified himself with the prosecution." A lurid light, this, upon the administration of justice! Surely the interests of justice are not to be served by devising additional obstacles to a fair and impartial trial. Section 526A was introduced into the

Code by Act III of 1884 as an outcome of the Ilbert Bill agitation, and as a sort of set-off for the benefit of the general community to the important concessions made to the European community. These concessions are to stand, but "it is now sought to modify and practically to set at naught the one concession which was made to the general community." Under Sections 256 and 257, the accused will be compelled to cross-examine each witness immediately after his examination-in-chief—a modification grievously disadvantageous to him as compared with his position under the existing law. These are but a few specimens of the new rigour.

In the third place, the chartered powers of the High Court are to be limited, if not altogether neutralised. They are to be restricted to the terms of the Code. Under Section 439, all direct transfer of an appeal from any Mofussil court to the High Court will be prevented. The Indian Association has "no hesitation in saying that public opinion will strongly condemn the proposed amendment." Neither have we: and we quite appreciate the remark that "to the public it is a matter of no little surprise to find that a judge of the High Court should have such a large share in the framing of a Bill which seeks to restrict the powers of the Court to which the learned judge belongs." Section 476 withdraws powers of revision which the High Court possesses in respect of proceedings under chapter xxxv of the Code. It is useless to go further. Only the other week we took occasion to remark that there is no other British institution in India which has commanded such a measure of respect, gratitude, and even veneration, as the High Court. Yet this panic-born Bill proposes wildly to degrade the dignity and efficiency of the highest temple of justice.

We need not go into details. The few leading points we have cited are sufficient to justify the gravest alarm at the folly of this ill-starred Bill. It may be added, however, that it makes "no attempt to remove inequalities and to cure real and grave anomalies." To one of these the Indian Association rightly draws special attention:

> Under the law as it now stands, a European British subject or an American, in any case in which he may be tried by the Sessions Court or the High Court, may claim that at least half the number of jurors or assessors (if he elects to forego his right to be tried by a jury) should be Europeans or Americans. A native of India, or any person who is not a European British subject or an American, may, in a case before the Sessions Court in a jury district, claim that the majority of the jurors should be other than Europeans or Americans. There is no reason why the native of India, when he is tried by the High Court, should not have the privilege which he enjoys in the Sessions Court—viz., that he should be tried by a majority of jurors who shall be his own countrymen. The principle involved in both cases is the same. If Americans, who are not British subjects, enjoy this privilege, surely natives of India who are British subjects are entitled to the same privilege. It equally stands to reason that, when a native of India is tried by assessors, the majority of them should be his countrymen.

Yes, it "stands to reason." But then under such a principle the Tilaks could not be convicted. What is the inner significance of this precious Bill but that the whole course of justice shall be under the thumb of the Government? It cuts at the very roots of the liberty of the Indian subject. It is a dismal outcome of panic, the inauguration of an open tyranny. The Indian Association and the Ahmedabad Legal Practitioners' Association, which may be taken as fully representative of Indian professional opinion, are solidly at one in their adverse criticisms. The weight of such objections, on the legal merits, ought to crush the ill-omened thing out of existence, once and for all. The political objections fall to the serious consideration of the House of Commons, which, we trust, will promptly and sternly stamp out this stupid recrudescence of the spirit of tyranny in a loyal Dependency thrilling with new hopes of a freer and nobler life.

GOVERNMENT EVICTIONS IN MADRAS.

By Alexander Rogers,
Late of the Bombay Civil Service.

On January 12, 1893, more than five years ago, the state of affairs in the land revenue administration of Madras was brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for India, and it was pointed out that in the three years 1887-88 to 1889-90 inclusive, land of the area of over 87,000 acres, held by 64,415 direct tenants of the State, in addition to personal property of the value of Rs. 276,611, had been sold in order to realise the current land revenue. Of the land sold, about 39,850 acres had had to be bought in by Government at nominal prices in the absence of bidders at the auction sales.

On March 29 of the same year I proposed, as a temporary measure until a proper revision of assessment could be carried out, that in the case of land thus sold and bought in, the net produce nominally levied by the State should be reduced from 50 to 40 or 30 per cent., according to locality and other circumstances, in order to induce people to take it up for tillage.

On June 20, 1894, I pointed out that out of 21,770 acres sold for the same purpose in 1890-91, the property of 10,115 defaulters, 9,346 had to be bought in by Government; and that in the following year, 1891-92, 20,273 acres, the property of 11,118 defaulters, were sold, and of this area 9,639 acres had to be bought in. The personal property sold in these two years was of the value respectively of Rs. 59,216 and Rs. 60,899.

On April 7, 1895, I pointed out that the number of defaulters had increased in 1892-93 to 12,400, and the area sold had risen to 30,296 acres, of which 14,668 acres were bought in. The personal property sold was of the value of Rs. 58,384. At the same time it was shown that there was an assessed area of over 3,669,000 acres lying waste and unprofitable to the State.

On January 28, 1896, it was shown that the number of defaulters in 1893-94 was 14,198, and that of a total area of 54,754 acres sold 25,862 had to be bought in. Personal property of the value of Rs. 53,876 was also sold.

On May 10, 1897, I brought to notice that there had been in 1894-95 10,371 defaulters, whose personal property had been sold to the value of Rs. 45,451, and real property of the area of 27,899 acres, of which 10,853 had been bought in.

For the year 1895-96 the returns show that there were 10,751 defaulters, whose personal property had been sold to the value of Rs. 53,319, and land of the area of 27,728 acres, of which 10,512 had been bought in. To sum up:

Years.		Defaulters.	Acres Sold.	Acres bought in.	Personal Property Sold. Rs.
1887-8 to 1890-1	..	64,415	87,114	39,849	276,611
1891-92	..	11,118	20,273	9,639	60,899
1892-93	..	12,400	30,296	14,668	58,384
1893-94	..	14,198	54,754	25,862	53,876
1894-95	..	10,371	27,899	10,853	45,451
1895-96	..	10,751	27,728	10,512	53,319
Total for 5 Years	..	123,253	248,064	111,383	548,540
Average	..	15,406			

In a letter of February 3, 1893, it was shown that in the eleven years ending with 1890-1 the landed property of 840,713 defaulters had been sold to the extent of 1,963,364 acres, and that of this area 1,174,143 (nearly 60 per cent.) was bought in for want of bidders. With this letter was forwarded a statement contrasting the Madras and Bombay systems of classification of soils, and assessment of soils by the Revenue Survey and Settlement Departments of the two Presidencies.

I was informed that my first letter, animadverting on the evils of the Madras system, was forwarded to the Government of Madras for report in the beginning of 1893. An answer was sent in 1896, after a delay of more than three years. To this I replied at once, and my remarks were, I was informed on August 6 of the latter year, also sent to Madras, but from that day to this no reply has been received, although a reminder was sent at the end of June, 1897, by the Secretary of State, who then forwarded a copy of my letter of May 10 of that year.

In the 60th paragraph of their report to the Local Government on the land-revenue settlement of 1895-96, the last received, the Board of Revenue, as it seems to me, quietly lay the whole matter on one side by saying they hope *before long* (the italics are mine) to deal with the whole subject of the number of defaulters, the sale of their lands and the area bought in by Government when the occupancy right of these is put up for sale by auction, and that they therefore consider it unnecessary to dilate further on the subject.

It may well be asked if this is a question that should be dealt with in this off-hand manner, when it not only concerns the interests of the State, but the welfare of from

30,000 to 50,000 people, for such would be the average number affected in the households of the 15,400 defaulters shown in the table given above.

In the letter from the Board of Revenue noted above as having been received in 1896, they endeavoured to excuse the state of affairs I had exposed by endeavouring to throw blame on the Collectors of land revenue, their subordinates, for not doing their duty properly, and went so far as to suggest that negligent Collectors should be turned out of their appointments. This, to say the least of it, is a clear confession of their own incompetence to direct the administration of revenue entrusted to their charge. Again, it is stated in the same letter as a reason for land put up to auction by the Government authorities having to be bought in by them, that villagers are in the habit of combining to delude the authorities into the impression that the land has no saleable value, with a view to its being declared ordinary Government waste, when it becomes available for occupation without payment for occupancy right. I do not for a moment believe this, for if the land is fairly assessed there is an abundance of agricultural population to take it up. But, admitting for the sake of argument that such may be the case, what complete incompetence on the part of the chief revenue authority of the Presidency is confessed when it allows that it cannot cope with such a combination.

In the Indian Statistical Abstract for 1895-96, it is stated that there are in the Presidency rather over 30,000,000 acres actually under crop or in current fallows, and 6,400,000 arable acres available for cultivation. Is it not worth an effort to bring this large area under the plough by improving the system of assessment? But what can be expected from a Board who have confessed their own incompetence in the way described above?

If the Secretary of State is as liable to be ignored as it is shown above he is in the matter of reports he calls for not being supplied; if, again, the Board as a Board are so incompetent to direct matters as they have acknowledged themselves to be, is it not high time that they should be done away with, and Revenue Commissioners, individually responsible for the conduct of land revenue matters, be substituted for them?

It may be as well to explain that Commissioners would visit annually on tour every part of the country and examine matters on the spot, whereas the Board sits permanently at Madras, and relies on the Collectors' reports for information.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, January 27.—Addressing a great Liberal gathering, which was held at Stirling, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. John Morley affirmed the principle of popular control of the drink traffic, and reiterated his adherence to Home Rule. As to the sugar question in the West Indies, the Government was in his opinion going too far. With respect to China, the Liberal party went a long way with the declared policy of the Government. Mr. Morley's remarks on the war beyond the Indian frontier are printed on another page.

The Progressive campaign in connexion with the approaching London County Council election was opened with a great meeting in the St. James's Hall.

The ballot of the members of the trade unions upon the question of the acceptance of the amended terms of settlement of the engineering dispute was completed.

A protracted meeting of the Cabinet was held at the Foreign Office. On the authority of a news agency it was stated that Lord Salisbury was able to report to his colleagues the acceptance of the Chinese loan on Great Britain's terms.

The mobbing and murder of a German sailor by Chinese at the German post of Tsimo, in Kiao-Chau Bay, was reported. It was not yet announced that another slice of Chinese territory would be demanded in payment.

FRIDAY, January 28.—The dispute in the engineering trade was settled. A joint meeting was held in London of representatives of the Employers' Federation and of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and the amended terms of settlement were formally accepted on behalf of the workmen. This acceptance had been authorised by the workmen in their ballot, the result of which showed that 28,588 had voted in favour of the acceptance of the terms and 13,727 to the contrary—a majority in favour of acceptance of 14,861. Work was to be resumed on Monday.

Another meeting of the Cabinet was held at the Foreign Office. Lord Ashbourne was the only Minister absent. It was understood that the deliberations had reference to the business of the coming Session.

Sir H. Fowler, M.P., speaking at Cleckheaton, said the Liberal party suffered from exaggeration as to their position. Their defeat in 1895 was a clear and distinct verdict of disapproval, not of administration, but of proposed legislation. But the bye-elections were a hopeful sign. So far as he could understand the policy of the Government on the question of China, he did not quarrel with it. He thought our duty was no more territorial acquisitions in China, no tampering with our treaty rights, and that whatever other nations had for commerce we should have. He could not see the good to Great Britain or Egypt of the operations in the Soudan, and it was impossible to smooth over what was going on in India by calling it a policy of "pacific control."

A telegram from Pekin stated that Russia had offered the Chinese Government a loan on the same terms as those offered by Lord Salisbury, Russia making up the difference between the offers of the French banks and the British terms.

SATURDAY, January 29.—The plague measures in the Bombay district resulted in a riot at Sinnar, the hospital assistant being killed and the segregation camp burned. The police fired on the mob, wounding some of them.

Mr. Chamberlain, speaking at Birmingham, said we had arrived at the time when a brief forecast might be given of the legislation of the coming Session. The chief measures would deal with local government in Ireland, the increase of the Army, and the grant of Municipal privileges to large areas in London. The most serious outlook was in foreign affairs; and he declared that our apathy a generation ago had seriously risked our commercial pre-eminence. It was the primary duty of any British Government to support and maintain the rights of British commerce.

SUNDAY, January 30.—News of a serious British reverse on the frontier reached Calcutta. During the combined movement of four Brigades against the Afridis in the Kajuri Plain, the troops of the fourth Brigade, which marched from Mamani, "became entangled in a gorge," and suffered severely. Lieut. Colonel Haughton, four other officers, and eight men were killed, two officers and seventeen men were wounded, and seventeen men of the Yorkshire Light Infantry were reported to be "missing."

The Special Correspondent of the *Standard* at Constantinople telegraphed that Russia and France had for the third time renewed to the Porte their suggestion that Prince George of Greece should be nominated to the Governorship of Crete. All pretence at concerted action, he added, was now abandoned.

An unfavourable report with regard to Mr. Gladstone's health was received. A telegram from Cannes stated that, after his drive on the previous day, he returned a little earlier than usual, was somewhat fatigued, and passed a restless night owing to neuralgia. During the night a physician was called to attend him, and another visit was paid to him in the morning. To-day he did not take his accustomed drive, nor was he present at Divine service. A reassuring telegram, however, dated Cannes, 8.40 p.m., stated that the ex-Premier kept his bed the whole day, and felt much relieved.

MONDAY, January 31.—General Westmacott's report on the Mamani reverse stated that no opposition was offered to the advance of the main body of the troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Seppings to Shinkumar Kotal. Colonel Haughton, with the Sikhs, proceeded about a mile to search the caves. It was then discovered that a company of Sikhs had somehow been withdrawn from a high ridge, which was the key to the position. The enemy at once occupied this ridge, and in its recapture most of the losses were incurred.

Work was resumed in all the engineering centres. From twenty to thirty per cent. was the average number of men restarted. No serious hitch was reported.

Mr. Chamberlain attended a meeting of the Liberal Unionist Executive for the Edgbaston Division of Birmingham. After his speech it was resolved, with one dissentient, to recommend the Divisional Council to leave the nomination of a candidate with the Conservative wing of the party. As was to be expected, the local excitement and speculation, which has been prevalent during the past few days, was not sensibly allayed by this announcement.

Sir H. Fowler, M.P., speaking at Bilston, said that we knew no party when Imperial interests were at stake. He deeply deplored the conflict which was being waged on the Indian frontier, but said he had no doubt when Parliament met the Government would explain what had been done, and would give some specific declaration of what they intended to do.

TUESDAY, February 1.—A protracted meeting of the Cabinet was held at the Foreign Office. The deliberations were stated to have had reference to the business of the coming Session and the preparation of the Queen's Speech. Three Ministers were absent.

Sir William Lockhart, who was to have left Bombay for England on Saturday, was reported to have expressed to an "interviewer" the opinion that the campaign against the

Afridis must be renewed in the spring; he believed they would surrender on a fresh advance being made. He defended the Generals, who had been condemned as incompetent, and said he thought the enormous difficulty of the Afridi country had never been properly understood. The march through the Bara Valley was, he considered, the hardest piece of soldiering our troops had ever experienced.

The Pekin correspondent of the *Times* stated that Great Britain had definitely withdrawn her demand for the opening of Ta-lien-wan as a condition of the proposed loan to China. —A Reuter despatch from Pekin stated that the German Government had demanded, in compensation for the murder of a German sailor near Kiao-Chau, some further concessions in regard to railways in Shan-tung.

The re-engagement of men at the engineering works throughout the country went on actively, and it was estimated that by evening fully 60 per cent. of the men who had struck or been locked out had been taken on again. Notices were sent out that the federated employers were at liberty to reinstate full staffs at once, and many of the shipbuilding and engineering works on the Clyde recommenced night shifts.

Mr. E. R. Calthrop, C.E., read a paper before a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute on "Light Railways for the Colonies." He illustrated the principles which should be kept in view in the construction of such lines by a description of the Barsi Light Railway in India.

WEDNESDAY, February 2.—A telegram received in Berlin stated that the Russian Ambassador had presented to the Porte a strongly worded Note from his Government regarding the candidature of Prince George to the Governorship of Crete. After reminding the Sultan of the support given him by the Tsar at difficult junctures, the Note declared the appointment of the Prince to be "an urgent political necessity," and "the unshakable will of the Tsar." Should the opposition at Constantinople be persisted in, the Russian Government would renounce all initiative there in future.

Mr. Chamberlain attended a meeting of the Liberal Unionist Council in Birmingham, and strongly urged the members to endorse the recommendation of the executive to concede the seat for the Edgbaston division to the Conservatives. He stated that a distinct pledge had been given to the Conservatives to give them the next vacant seat in Birmingham, and that not to fulfil that pledge would imperil not only the Unionist compact in that city, but in the country generally, and would give the Home Rulers the opportunity for which they were anxiously waiting. Many members expressed strong objections to handing over the seat to the Conservatives, but on a division the resolution of the Executive was adopted by eighty-four to twenty-nine votes.

Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Devonshire received at the Foreign Office a deputation representing twenty London vestries, who presented a memorial praying that they should be constituted separate municipalities.

BRITISH INDIANS IN NATAL.

(BY SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I., in the *Saturday Review*.)

The last of the British Colonies to receive responsible self-government was Natal, which in 1893 was endowed with two Houses of Legislature and the usual paraphernalia of constitutional government, although at the time the adult white population numbered no more than 15,000. The concession then made with some hesitation by the Crown has generally been justified by the orderly working of the new legislative machine; but one question of paramount importance in the development of the Colony has already given rise to considerable discussion and ill-feeling, and will, in the near future, cause serious embarrassment unless handled in a liberal and statesmanlike manner. This is the treatment of immigrants from British India, who have lately been the subjects of legislation so opposed to the ordinary traditions of English public life that the matter demands examination in England. To us, after careful consideration of the whole question, the Colonists' action appears both impolitic and very unjust.

The country of Natal, which now includes Zululand and Tongaland, is of all the South African Colonies that most favoured by nature, in scenery, rainfall, and fertility of the soil. Its capital, Durban, is a handsome and well-ordered town of some 30,000 inhabitants, of whom about half are Europeans. The black indigenous Kaffir population of Natal is roughly estimated at 450,000, nine times that of the whites, who now number about 50,000. The Kaffirs are still "savages," though of late years, under missionary teaching and association with Europeans, they have made some advance in civilisation; but they are impulsive, restless, and lazy, learning with great difficulty industrial arts and disinclined to regular labour as agriculturists. The occupation that suits them best is the rough, highly paid work at the gold and diamond mines, where they can quickly earn enough to buy the wives and cattle which constitute a Kaffir Paradise. They are and will probably remain of little use for the industrial and agricultural development of the Colony. Hence it is necessary to procure labour from without, and an inexhaustible source of excellent material has been found in India, and from there it has been the custom to bring coolies under indenture, with whose assistance the well-watered, low coastlands have been turned into sugar plantations, and the slopes behind Durban into fruit and vegetable gardens, so richly productive that they can profitably export to Europe. Excellent cotton can also be grown, and the cultivation of tea has been begun on the highlands. The Indian coolie has thus become indispensable to the prosperity of Natal, for the old tradition of negro slavery, under which South Africa was originally occupied by both Dutch and English, has left behind it the unfortunate consequences that manual labour, even in a temperate climate, is considered by white men to be degrading, as was the case in the Southern States of America before the Civil War.

Here the difficulty arises. The Colonists are anxious to obtain a large and increasing supply of indentured labour, but require the coolie to return to India after his engagement or to renew it on similar terms, in default of which an onerous and indeed crushing poll-tax of £3 annually is imposed upon him. But it is against the free and unindentured Indian immigrant that the hostility of the Colonist is most bitter. Large numbers of this class, far more respectable, educated, and well-to-do than the indentured coolie, have settled in Natal, and these industrious and sober immigrants have captured the petty hawker and pedlar trade with the native population. They are able to work at a far lower margin of profit than the whites, and there can be little doubt that, were immigration unimpeded, many of the artisan class would come from India and obtain a large share of the work that is now extravagantly executed by white artisans who will not work without native assistance. The old question of Chinese immigration which has so agitated Australia and the United States has thus, in a different form and in connexion with an infinitely higher race, become urgent in Natal. But the Indian, like the Englishman, is of Aryan race; he is also a subject of the Queen, and in personal character is cleanly, sober, orderly, and industrious. Trade jealousy may object to his presence; but, if we consider the vast preponderance of the Kaffir population, now rapidly increasing with the cessation of war and the suppression of the murderous witch-seekers, and pay regard to the agricultural development of the country, it is difficult to imagine a more beneficial circumstance for Natal than a large Indian immigration of loyal and capable workers, which would counterbalance and minimise the greatest danger which the South African Colonies have to face in the immense and increasing preponderance of a restless and savage indigenous population.

The grievances of Indian emigrants divide themselves naturally into three classes, political, social, and industrial. The political grievance consists in the refusal of the franchise which was enjoyed by Indians, under certain limitations, when the Colony first received self-government. Very soon a party grew up which urged so successfully the objection to granting the franchise in a British colony to any persons not of European race, whether Indian or Kaffir, who might, on critical occasions, swamp the white vote, that a law was hastily passed in 1894, altogether excluding them from the suffrage. The Colonial Office, however, insisted on a modification of this Act, and in 1897 an amended law was passed under which the Governor in Council may confer the right of franchise on such Indians as he thinks fit. It is obvious that this special privilege will only be granted to a few of the well-to-do trading or official Indian community. English public opinion would not support the Colonial Office in insisting on larger political privileges than are thus accorded. Every self-governing British Colony must decide for itself the conditions under which the franchise shall be granted to its native population, and it is certain that where the white population is enormously outnumbered by men of colour it will refuse to admit to the franchise a population which has no political experience—a people for the most part uneducated, easily led, and likely to be a source of grave danger at the ballot-boxes.

The only real grievances that seem to call for protest on the part of fair-minded Englishmen are those which are directly concerned with the industrial disabilities imposed upon the Indians. A series of four Acts was passed in 1897, which is admittedly intended to prevent unindentured Indians from obtaining temporary or permanent settlement in the Colony. The first is a quarantine law of exceptional severity obviously directed not against contagious disease but against immigration. The second Act, "to place restrictions on immigrants," practically prohibits Indian immigration by compelling the application for admission to be written and signed in one of the languages of Europe. Without such authorisation an immigrant can receive a licence to carry on any trade or calling only by incurring exceedingly heavy penalties, which are further imposed on any master or owner of a ship who may bring prohibited immigrants to the Colony. The third Act, "to amend the law relating to licences to wholesale or retail dealers," places the right of granting or refusing licences to trade in the hands of an officer appointed by the Town Councils or Boards representing the very classes most opposed to Indian com-

petition. Nor is permission allowed to appeal against his decision in any court of law. It further provides that no licence shall be issued to any person who does not keep his books of account in the English language. This provision shuts the door on all the large Indian traders and merchants who are unacquainted with English, while it is equally fatal to the smaller pedlars and hawkers who are unaccustomed to use any account books at all. The fourth Act "deals with the question of passes," a cause of infinite trouble and annoyance, and subjects any Indian found without a pass in his possession to arrest and imprisonment without any right of appeal or compensation for wrongful arrest and detention.

These are but a few of the un-English and ungenerous political measures with which the Colony of Natal has, unwisely for its own interests, inaugurated its self-governing career. In no other British Colony have measures so drastic and inequitable been seriously proposed by the legislature, and it is not surprising that in India, without whose assistance the Colony of Natal would fall into the same state of stagnation which preceded the introduction of indentured Indian coolies, there is a strong feeling of indignation at the illiberality and ingratitude of the treatment meted out to the higher and more respectable class of Indian settlers.

THE WAR BEYOND THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

SPEECH BY MR. JOHN MORLEY.

In the course of a speech delivered at Stirling, on January 27, the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., said:—

A few words upon the Indian frontier question. I read with the utmost amazement what the Secretary of State for the Colonies said regarding the frontier war. He expressed what I cannot but call a novel opinion, a pernicious opinion, a highly dangerous opinion, and it is this, "Would you trust," he says upon this frontier question, "would you trust the observations made by ourselves, who have to learn everything within a few months or a few years from documents and papers, or would you trust those who, like the Indian Government, have been engaged for years and years in studying this question, and the military experts whose business it is to understand and study the military aspects of the case. The late Government were prepared to override the unanimous opinions of the Indian Government and the opinions of the majority of the greatest experts in military science." First of all, and I am speaking in the presence of a confederate, as a matter of fact, it is wholly incorrect and wholly misleading. (Hear, hear.) Men of the highest military experience, and of the largest study of these frontier questions, were strenuously and are strenuously and inflexibly opposed to this war. (Cheers.) Let me add that just as strenuous opponents are found among Anglo-Indians. My right hon. friend knows that perfectly well. I am the last man to speak without respect and sympathy of the soldiers, the efforts and suffering of the soldiers in the field in this expedition, and all the heroic qualities which such scenes as these have brought forth. They are to some extent a partial compensation for all the wretchedness and destruction of the war. But we do not appreciate that any the less because we think that the policy of these operations was a most erroneous and ill-conceived policy. (Cheers.) I am saying nothing against the military advisers in their own field, but I think it was my right hon. friend himself who said the soldier was like fire. He is a good servant but a bad master. Let us suppose for a moment that there was an overwhelming weight, which there was not, of military opinion in favour of our securing passes beyond the frontier. Does that for one instant justify British statesmen in washing their hands of all responsibility? A more monstrous doctrine I really cannot imagine. I set up an entirely counter case to Mr. Chamberlain's case. Control by the central authority is not to be so minute or detailed as to fetter and cripple those who are the agents and representatives of this country in difficult conditions abroad. At the same time it is the House of Commons at Westminster, it is the Cabinet in Downing Street, that is ultimately responsible. No; I am wrong. It is you who are ultimately responsible. (Cheers.) It is you who are ultimately responsible, for it is you who create and constitute the House of Commons, and it is you who determine who are the men and what are the principles which are to guide the House of Commons in regulating those vast and momentous affairs. (Cheers.) Mr. Chamberlain says, "I hope you will excuse me if we"—that is, the present Government—"have not quite the same confidence in our own infallibility." Well, I welcome any disclaimer of infallibility from that quarter. (Laughter.) We took up our line of action, we formed our judgment, not because we thought ourselves infallible, but because we thought and think that the final question of the propriety of occupying passes or other territory beyond the present frontier depended upon considerations of great variety and force, political and financial considerations, which a Cabinet of civilians is much better able, from the wider range and combination of its knowledge and of the arguments present to the minds of the members of such a body, to weigh and to comprehend than the most brilliant soldier in India. Mr. Chamberlain said the night before last he thought there would be no difference between us and them when the discussion takes place. Well, I shall be happy to find that that is so. We shall receive after we assemble papers, and at all events we shall understand from the Government what their proposal is. But our contention, I am sure, will be that any occupation, any manufacture of roads, will be a departure from the only sound principles upon which, in the minds of the best authorities, you can carry on your frontier administration. They will say it is only roads, but if you occupy a pass it will mean forts and putting troops into them. Common sense and experience tell us that you will have on your hands people on both sides. I hope the Government will not drag us along that road. How many troops will they lock up and how many tens of thousands of pounds will they fling away? How will they persuade the people of India—you are taking their money for many years to come to pay for all those things—how will you persuade them it will do any good to them? And now I come to what is much to the front. I have only one sentence to say upon it. Who is to pay? Some weeks ago I said that I had been told that the expenditure would be something like £10,000,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at Bristol, following me, said, "Oh, that is an extravagant over-estimate. Not over two and a half millions." But now, I understood that the other day he said that there would be no demand made upon us. Well, I confess I don't understand—he is a man who never says anything without good foundation for it, but I don't understand what he means by his present position. But this is the point that I will put to you without fear, and I will put it without fear to any audience in England or in Scotland. You here are exulting in the vast magnitude of British dominions, in the might of your fleets, in the incomparable strength of your finance, in surpluses measured by millions and millions; and then you come upon India, stricken by blight and famine, plagues and earthquakes, and you throw upon them the burden of operations undertaken not because the people of this country ever thought it necessary, not because the Government, as a result of the independent operation of their own minds, thought it necessary, but because a handful of military experts choose to say that they regard that as a policy that ought to be pursued.

In a later passage in his speech, Mr. Morley added:—

You have had several speeches made which you have read at breakfast or supper time in the last fortnight, and here are three things which are foreshadowed and opened up in these speeches from eminent and responsible ministers. First, there is the possibility of further military operations on the North-West frontier of India; second, isolated action, which Mr. Chamberlain foreshadows, in respect to Crete; third, war arising out of the position in China. You have those three contingencies. Heaven knows whether they will come. I trust they are remote, but responsible men raise them in discussion. We must face them, and recognise it as possible. They may happen or they may not, but ministers themselves tell you they have no more engagements than these three sets of demands upon your resources. I ask you as men of sense and sober judgment—agree with us about the domestic policy as you like—I ask whether, with such contingencies before us, it is not preposterous to lock up a large number of British forces in the Soudan. I ask whether that deserves to be called by any other name than preposterous.

On the motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, seconded by Sir C. Cameron, the meeting expressed want of confidence in the Government's management of foreign affairs, and condemned the policy which had led to the present frontier war in India.

SIR H. FOWLER AT CLECKHEATON.

In the course of a speech delivered at Cleckheaton (Yorkshire) on Friday last (January 28) Sir H. Fowler said:—

Well, the Chairman alluded to the Indian question. (Cheers.) I am not going to make a speech upon India to-night. (Cries of "Go on.") No, I stated my views on the Indian question at great length a short time ago. Nothing that has transpired since has induced me to qualify one sentence or retract one opinion which I expressed on that subject. I saw the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs stated the other night that the Government policy was not intended to be one of heedless annexation, but what he called "pacific control." I don't know what "pacific control" means. (Laughter.) If we are to conquer at enormous cost the tribes, that means annexation. That means vast responsibilities and endless complications, and I don't think that all those, as I think, disastrous results can be smoothed over, by even so accomplished a phrasemaker as Mr. Curzon, under the seductive words "pacific control." (Hear, hear.) Well, the reply which the Government have given again and again to what has been said through the length and breadth of the land on their policy has been, "What is your policy? What is your programme? You are finding fault with ours, what is yours?" Well, they said that once before. They said that in times very similar to these times, when the country was being roused on the Afghan War, and what did the great leader of the Liberal party say then—I think in Midlothian—"It is attempted by the leaders of the party in power to have this great case tried not upon the merits of the Government, but upon the merits of the Opposition. I have never known circumstances of that kind before. I have always found that it was considered to be the business of the Opposition to challenge and criticise the Government, and of the country to try the criticism; but this Government appears to think that that process had better be reversed, and that it is to be the demerits of the Opposition, and not the merits of the Government, which the country should be invited to try." I tell you candidly I care very little for Liberal programmes, but I care a great deal for Liberal principles. (Hear, hear.) There is an old-fashioned prejudice in this country in favour of doing one thing at a time, and doing it well. (Hear, hear.) There is no doubt, no difficulty, in any man's mind as to what Liberal principles are.

SIR H. FOWLER AT BILSTON.

In the course of a speech at Bilston on Monday evening, January 31, Sir H. Fowler said:—

I deeply deplore the war that has taken place on the North-West frontier of India. When Parliament meets I have no doubt we shall

have full explanations of what has been done in the past, and the Government will doubtless make some specific explanation of what they intend to do in the future, and I would rather reserve any criticism I may have to make until I feel quite sure of the ground on which I am treading. But I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that twenty years ago, under a Conservative Government, we were plunged in an Afghan war, entailing enormous expense upon the Government of India and the Imperial Government, and I cannot shut my eyes also to the fact that the righteousness of that Afghan war was overwhelmingly denied by the constituencies of this country, although a majority of 101 had sanctioned it in Parliament. (Cheers.)

SIR JOSEPH LEESE, Q.C., M.P., AT PADIHAM.

Speaking at Padiham on January 29, Sir J. F. Leese, Q.C., M.P., reviewed the origin and course of the war beyond the North-West frontier. At the close of his speech, he said:—

What was the cause of the rising? There could be little doubt that if the road had not been made and no fort had been built to protect it there would have been no war. The war was the direct result of making and fortifying the road, and there was nothing ungenerous or unfair in placing the blame upon those who deliberately adopted this policy, a policy in direct opposition to that of the Liberal Government. The expedition was a punitive expedition, but we had been as much punished as those we sought to punish. What was to come next, what was to be the policy of the future with regard to this road? If we insisted on maintaining it, we must conquer the independent tribes and annex their useless territory; on the other hand, to give it up involved an admission of failure and bad judgment. But in any case it seemed to him that the English people had had enough of this war, and would strenuously oppose any repetition of it. (Applause) As to the question of cost, he thought it could not be less than eight or ten millions. Who were to pay the bill? If the person who gave the order ought to pay, it would fall upon the British Government and the British taxpayer, for it must be kept in mind that the Indian Government was entirely under the thumb of the Secretary for India. If it was said that the country ought to pay which got the greatest advantage out of the war, the difficulty would be to discover any advantage to distribute. If, as was suggested, the real value of this fortified road was to protect the Queen's Indian subjects from raids, then it would seem that the Indian people ought to pay. Equally, if the road was to protect the tribes from the attack of others, the tribes ought to pay. And if, as was also suggested, the road was to protect the Amir of Afghanistan, then he ought to contribute. Of course, neither the tribes nor the Amir would pay, so the bill would have to be met either by India or Great Britain. Which was it to be? If the question were decided in England it would probably be said that India should pay. On the other hand, if it were decided in India, the Indians would say that the war was the handiwork of the English Cabinet, and that England ought to pay. But the question would be decided by a factor stronger than argument—India simply could not pay the bill, so Britain would have to do it. In concluding, Sir Joseph said he did not think anything of the suggestion that the war had been indifferently conducted. The real blame lay upon those who put upon our soldiers an almost impossible task. (Applause.)

MR. ROMESH C. DUTT, C.I.E., AT SWINDON.

A large and enthusiastic meeting was held at Swindon last Saturday (January 29), in support of the Liberal candidate for the Cricklade division, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, who is brother of Lord Lansdowne, late Viceroy of India, but unlike Lord Lansdowne a true Liberal in politics. The candidate himself, Lord Edmond, spoke on home politics, and Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., spoke on Indian affairs for nearly an hour, during which he was repeatedly interrupted by prolonged and enthusiastic cheers.

Mr. Dutt said that he considered it an honour and a privilege to appear in support of the Liberal party and of the Liberal candidate Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice. He appeared before them, not altogether as a stranger, but as a British subject, and as one who was proud to call himself a subject of their beloved Queen. The name of the Queen of England was cherished with affection and love in all the colonies and dependencies of England's world-wide empire, but nowhere did it evoke greater loyalty and affection than among the millions of India. (Cheers.) Nor was this merely a passive sentiment. In times of action the people of India could sacrifice their lives for their Queen, side by side with the bravest soldiers whom these islands sent out, as was proved by the incidents of the present war. (Cheers.) What was the secret of this loyalty? What was the secret of the British ascendancy in India? Military people sometimes asserted that India was conquered by the sword and held by the sword. (Cries of "No, no.") He was glad that this assertion was so emphatically denied, because a falser assertion was never made. He maintained without hesitation that India was won by good government and was held by good government. (Prolonged cheers.) In the last century when the central power of Mogul Emperors had gone to pieces, when lawless freebooters swept through the country, when State warred against State and tribe warred against tribe, the British Power appeared on the scene as the one Power which could give the country peace and rest and settled government and a just administration. The people saw this and felt this, and spontaneously gave their support to this Power. In Bengal, in Madras, in Bombay, in the North-West, the silent and efficacious support of the people, and not victories on the battlefield, helped the rise of the British power, and maintained British power in India. To this day the silent and efficacious support of the people supported the government, which in spite of blunders and mistakes meant to be just and righteous. All administrative officers knew this. He himself had taken his humble share in the work of administration under the Government of India for twenty-five years; he had charge of Indian Districts with areas of four to six thousand square miles, with populations of two to three millions, situated hundreds of miles from the nearest seat of the army, and having for his support only a few subordinate civil officers, and a body of police less than five hundred strong. But under these circumstances he felt perfectly secure in the exercise of his power and authority because of the silent and efficacious support of the people among whom he worked, and who knew that whatever his blunders were, whatever the blunders of the Government were, the Government was trying honestly to promote their welfare, secure peace, and do justice between man and man. (Cheers.) India was thus held not by the sword but by good government. If the government turned unwise and foolish and oppressive, the hundred thousand British troops could not hold together a population of over two hundred millions for a single generation—not for a single year. (Cries of "No, they could not.") And if the Government were wise and recognised the claims of the people for reforms and popular privileges nothing could sever India from England. (Cheers.) Looking back to the history of the past forty years, he maintained that generally speaking whenever the Liberals had been in power for a long period, India enjoyed peace and good government, and whenever the Tories had been in power for a long time India drifted into foolish and unjust annexations, into sinful and disastrous wars. (Loud cheers.) He pointed to the period of sixteen years since the abolition of the East India Company, from 1858 to 1874, during which the Liberals were in power at home with brief interruptions, and during which India enjoyed peace under such wise rulers as Lord Canning and Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook. He pointed to the next period of six years, 1874 to 1880, when the Tories were in power and when a foolish Viceroy was sent out to carry out a foolish policy which ended in disaster and war. He pointed to the third period of 1880 to 1885, when the Liberals were in power, and India enjoyed peace once more under the beneficent administration of Lord Ripon, than whom no better or more popular Viceroy had ruled in India. And he pointed to the last period, 1885, to the present date, when the Tories were in power with brief interruptions, and during which successive Viceroys—Lords Dufferin, Lansdowne, and Elgin—had wasted the revenues of impoverished India in making unprofitable annexations, useless roads and forts beyond India's natural frontier, in weakening the frontier, and making enemies of friendly tribes. (Cries of "Shame.") Mr. Dutt then referred to the calamities which had crowded on India during the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee—famine, plague, earthquake, a storm-wave sweeping away thousands of men, a needless and iniquitous war. Amidst these complications, in the face of the vast expenditure which had to be incurred for the relief of the famine and the prosecution of the war, India expected some help, some relief from the British Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had given some hope of relief about a month ago, and had then turned round and said that the Indian Government did not want the money from the British Exchequer. The reason of their sudden change had leaked out through a paper in India which had mysterious access to the views of the Indian Government. That paper had said that Parliamentary interference in Indian concerns had done mischief in the past, and it was undesirable to let the British workman pay for the Indian war, lest he enquired too minutely into the causes and the necessity of the war. It came to this, that the Indian Government were so afraid of the British public enquiring into Indian wars and Indian administration that they would rather have no help from the British Exchequer than ask for help which might be followed by enquiry. (Cries of "Shame.") But he hoped that the British public would enquire into Indian questions, and he hoped that his hearers would support that great Liberal party which had in the past identified itself with peace and domestic improvement in India.

There was loud and prolonged cheering for nearly a minute when Mr. Dutt resumed his seat, and when he left the room a few minutes later to catch the train for Oxford, the audience as by one impulse left their seats, came round him, shook hands with him, and followed him with cries of "God bless India," "God bless your countrymen."

Lord Harris, speaking at a Unionist meeting at Southend on January 31, said that the Ministerial policy with regard to India was not one of aggression or increase of territory, but simply arose out of a desire to protect our fellow-subjects in various parts of the world. The tribes over the south frontier might be less warlike, but they were the kindred of tribes further north. On our side we had law, order, and a regular code of laws; but on the other side, they had to appeal to political officers. The short difference was that on our side there was the process of law, and on the other side the process of force. When the tribesmen on the other side got short of cash or cattle or camels they came over to our side and "lifted" some, and very often they could not be recovered. What was to be done? Were our fellow-subjects on this side of the frontier, because they had brown skins instead of white, to be entirely neglected? That was not the way in which we had built up this British empire. They must make the tribes respect the British flag. They could not make omelettes without breaking eggs, and they were not going to protect our fellow-subjects on this side without using arms on the other. This was the most arduous campaign that was ever undertaken, and for the first time we had to meet Oriental tribes, armed with modern weapons of precision, and trained, many of them, in the science of war.

The following is the text of the first resolution proposed at the great public meeting in Queen's Hall, Langham Place, convened last night by the Liberal "Forwards":—"That this meeting denounces as fatal to the honour and influence of Great Britain, the policy of the Government, by which Armenia has been abandoned, Greece and Crete ruined, a disastrous war forced upon the people of India, and slavery sanctioned in South Africa."

INDIA IN THE BRITISH PRESS.

The *Manchester Guardian* of February 1 wrote in its first leading article :—

In a letter which we print this morning an Indian correspondent begs Englishmen to "come forward and put a stop to" the steps which the Indian Government is taking to cow the Indian Press. If he spoke only for himself one might pass his letter by, but nobody who sees the Indian newspapers can doubt that our correspondent says what many thousands of Indians feel, and what some millions more would feel and say if they quite grasped what is being done. Journalists in India were free until last year to express disapprobation of the measures of the Government in any terms "compatible with a disposition to render obedience to the lawful authority of the Government, and to support the lawful authority of the Government against unlawful attempts to subvert or resist that authority." For instance, all the terms of censure and abuse directed by good Unionists against the late Liberal Administration would, under the Indian Penal Code, have been lawful except the suggestions made by present Ministers of the Crown and other persons that Ulstermen should resist tax-gatherers and assault the police rather than "render obedience to the lawful authority" of a Government enforcing a distasteful law. The distinction is a reasonable one. Last year, however, the courts decided that this law did not mean what Sir James Stephen, who drafted it, said that it meant. "Disaffection," it was ruled, meant "absence of affection," not necessarily such a very antipodes to affection as a feeling incompatible with a disposition to obey the law must be, but any feeling of ill-will, great or small. In fact, if the Indian Penal Code, thus interpreted, had been the law of the United Kingdom between 1892 and 1894, we fear that not only Colonel Saunderson and the wilder men, but nearly all the leaders of their party could have been caught in the same net as Mr. Tilak. At any rate the point is fairly arguable, and the comparison may give English people an insight into the nature of the Government's proposals.

For the Indian Government does not intend to rely merely on the triumph of sophistical interpretation achieved by Mr. Justice Strachey. It is now changing the Code itself, so that its real meaning may indeed be that for which Mr. Justice Strachey mistook it. Stephen's explanation of his own clause is apparently to be dropped, and, quite apart from "disaffection," it is to be a penal offence to write anything that "brings or attempts to bring" the Government "into hatred or contempt" or "promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or ill-will between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects." Once more it is best to seek illustrations nearer home. All Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian speeches tended to bring the British Government of 1874-80 into hatred and contempt. Mr. Chamberlain used all his talents to bring the Government into hatred and contempt between 1892 and 1895. It was the general complaint of Conservatives that John Bright promoted feelings of ill-will between the landed class and the dwellers in English towns. It is at this moment the desire of a great many persons, ourselves included, to excite hatred and contempt against the action of the Government in South-east Europe and in some parts of Africa. If after the proposed changes had been made in the Penal Code an Indian journalist did as much, he would render himself liable to ten years' imprisonment or to transportation for life. At present persons accused under this clause must be tried by Courts of Session or by High Courts. It is proposed that henceforth they may be tried by magistrates of the first class. Hitherto the judge in such cases has never been a member of the Executive Administration whose acts, it may be, have been adversely criticised by the person accused. Good care has been taken that the prosecutor or his colleague or subordinate shall not also be the judge. That precaution is to be taken no longer. A censorious editor may be brought before the magistrate of his district who is also an executive official of the district, and who therefore may well have fallen within the editor's censures of local administration. And in such a case the man who morally occupies the position of plaintiff will have power to send the defendant to prison for ten years or to impose such a fine as may silence him by ruining him.

In drawing illustrations from home politics we have not overlooked the obvious retort—that we govern ourselves by a party system, that India is governed differently, and that this difference vitiates any comparisons of the kind we have drawn. It does impair their force, but it does not invalidate them altogether. As Sir William Markby said ten days ago in the *Spectator*, "two things must be borne in mind—first, that the magistrate in India represents the Government, and the native press 'the Opposition.' The state of things proposed, therefore, would be paralleled here if Press offences could be dealt with by the heads of the police and care were taken that the heads of the police should always be warm partisans of the Government." It is all thoroughly Russian. We have heard lately several new precepts for the better government of India. One of them was that we were to condone murder and every kind of outrage in Asia Minor because we were "a great Mahometan Power," and our fellow-citizens in India might not stand it if we put the Sultan of Turkey to the inconvenience of keeping his treaty with us. We were to make interest with one of the vilest rulers on the earth in the hope that he would be so good as to suffer India to be loyal to us. No doubt that is the "temper of Empire." And now, after we have employed men like Macaulay, Maine, and Stephen to mould a great system of law for India, we are to abandon the first principles of their jurisprudence and allow minor English officials in India to inflict long terms of imprisonment on those who question their conduct in language that nobody would dream of regarding as unlawful if it were used in English newspapers. Perhaps this, again, is the august temper of Empire, and it must be a taint in blood that makes us others, "Little Englanders," loathe the idea of using Russian methods to silence Indian public opinion only less than we loathe the idea of wheedling the Mahometan part of India into good humour by conniving at great massacres of Christians.

The following is the letter which is referred to in the article printed above :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

Sir,—It is an axiomatic truth that kindly and sympathetic treatment engenders affection, and oppression begets discontent. But our present rulers seem to hold a different view on the subject. They managed to create great discontent in the land by their extraordinary measures, and when the Indian newspapers voiced the popular feeling in their columns they sought to put down the discontent by prosecuting the editors of certain newspapers and sending them to gaol. But the wrath of the Government is not yet satisfied. It is going to amend the present sedition law. If this be done, it will be all over with the Indian press, for the new definition of "disaffection" is even more comprehensive than the interpretation of Mr. Justice Strachey on Section 124A Indian Penal Code. A child can see that if the Indian press is needed in the interest of the people, it is also needed in that of the Government; for it is simply impossible for an alien Government to rule a vast country like India without knowing the minds of the people. Lord Macaulay and other far-sighted statesmen of old days saw this, and thus gave liberty to the Press. If the Indian Press ceases to exist (and it will be the necessary outcome if the proposed law be passed), the Government will be deprived of the only beacons which now give them light, and will be immersed in Cimmerian darkness. It is time that the English people should come forward and put a stop to the suicidal policy the present rulers are following.—Yours, etc., BIPIN KRISHNA BOSE.

Calcutta, January 10.

[Enclosure.]

INDIAN PENAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Further Amendments of the Code to be proposed for consideration of the Select Committee.

I. Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code is hereby repealed, and the following section is substituted therefor, namely :—124A. Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards Her Majesty or the Government, or promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or ill-will between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, shall be punished with transportation for life or any shorter term, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to ten years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.

Explanation 1. The expression "disaffection" includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity or ill-will.

Explanation 2. Comments on the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt, or disaffection, do not constitute an offence.

II. Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code is hereby repealed and the following section is substituted therefor, namely :—505. Whoever makes, publishes, or circulates any statement, rumour, or report (*a*) with intent to cause or which is likely to cause any officer, soldier, or sailor in the army or navy of Her Majesty, or in the Royal Indian Marine, or in the Imperial Service Troops to mutiny, or otherwise disregard or fail in his duty as such; or (*b*) with intent to cause or which is likely to cause fear or alarm to the public, or to any section of the public whereby they may be induced to commit an offence against the State, or against the public tranquillity; or (*c*) with intent to incite or which is likely to incite any class or community of persons to commit any offence against any other class or community shall be punished with imprisonment of either description, which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

Exception. It does not amount to an offence within the meaning of this section to make, publish, or circulate any such statement, rumour, or report as aforesaid when such statement, rumour, or report is true and is made, published, or circulated without such intent as aforesaid.

THE CONGRESS AT AMRAOTI.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

The following is the concluding portion (continued from our issue of January 21) of the address delivered by Mr. C. Sankaran Nair, at Amraoti, on December 27 last, as President of the 13th Indian National Congress :—

It is also to be borne in mind that a large portion of this unnecessary expenditure is due to the recognition, not perhaps openly

in words, but in acts and policy by Government, of the idea that the English are a foreign and superior race holding India by the sword and that the Indians are, as a rule, not worthy of trust and confidence. To us this idea is hateful, and therefore we insist upon equality before law and Government. We maintain that no distinction ought to be made between classes or races, that the Queen's Proclamation should be adhered to, and therefore we protest against the principle underlying the Arms Act whereby no native of India may possess or carry arms without special license, while Europeans and Eurasians may bear arms unquestioned. We appeal to our Government to authorize a system of volunteering for Indians and not confine it practically to Europeans and Eurasians, thereby creating and fostering class prejudices. For the same reason we demand that the military service in its higher grades should not be restricted to Europeans alone, but should be practically opened to the natives of this country, and that colleges be established for training them for the military career. On the same ground we press for admission into the Public Service on an equal footing with Europeans. Apart from economic necessity, the stability and permanence of British connexion require that not only no positive disqualification should exist, but that the rules intended to make the declarations of 1833 and the Queen's promise of 1858 a dead letter must be removed. For the Civil Service, the Police, the Forest Service, the Salt Service, and even the Educational Service rules are framed apparently on the assumption that a European is by mere reason of his nationality fit, and an Indian for the same reason is unfit, for the higher appointments in those services.

The concession of these demands means an enormous increase in India's defensive strength against any foe; it means a reduction in taxation which, at the rate it is now growing, must involve the ruin of the country. These distinctions on the other hand cast a slur on our loyalty, accentuate race prejudices in a most invidious form, and relegate Indians to the position of an inferior race, and silently ensure the emasculation of our manhood. The disastrous consequences of this race question are already apparent. Englishmen and other European colonists in South Africa and Australia refuse to treat us on terms of equality, and justify their refusal on account of our degraded position in our own country. On the other hand, a section—I hope a very small section—of our fellow-subjects regard a foreign power of its own religion following a course of policy apparently abhorrent to the conscience of the English public, with feelings which, though unconsciously, took their origin in the refusal of Englishmen to treat them as fellow-citizens in reality and not merely in name. To this feeling of race superiority is also due the frequent contemptuous treatment of respectable people by soldiers, a treatment which renders them a terror to peaceful inhabitants, and which according to the confessions apparently believed by Government has led to the Poona tragedy. The racial feeling I refer to is confirmed by the belief generally entertained in India that it is almost impossible to secure the conviction of an European accused of any heinous offence. If that feeling is justified by the action of our authorities, then the position is deplorable. If the impression is unwarranted, then its origin must be due to the idea of inequality before law generally entertained. On this race question no concession is possible. No compromise can be accepted so far as it lies in us. We must insist on perfect equality. Inequality means race inferiority, national abasement. Acquisition, therefore, of all civil rights conferred on Englishmen, removal of all disabilities on Indians as such—these must be our aim.

THE POONA INCIDENTS.

I shall now briefly refer to the Poona plague operations and their unfortunate developments. This country was passing through a terrible ordeal. Poverty which may be said to be the normal condition of our masses deepened into famine. In the Bombay Presidency it was followed by Plague, a terrible disease for which no remedy has yet been discovered. The measures which the Government had to take for its suppression in Poona, which was badly affected, were said to have interfered with the domestic habits of the Hindus and Mahometans; soldiers who were employed to enforce these Government measures were, rightly or wrongly, generally believed to have insulted women and defiled places of worship. The result was prostration of the people. A feeling of helplessness came over them. In Western countries the result would have been lawlessness. In Poona many contented themselves with abandoning their homes. Some resigned themselves to sullen apathy and despair. There were a few who protested against Government measures, pointing out their unnecessary harshness. Amongst those who protested was Mr. Natu, a leading Poona Sirdar. His formal written complaints recently published in England disclose, if any reliance can be placed on them, a state of affairs which certainly demanded attention. Let me give you a brief summary of his complaints.

The inspection of houses by soldiers seems to have been carried out without notice by forcing open, very often unnecessarily when there were other means of entrance, the locks of the shops and the houses when the owners were absent, and absolutely no attempt was made to protect the properties or the houses. No notice was taken of complaints concerning them. A Hindu lady was assaulted by a soldier, and Mr. Natu reported the matter to the authorities, producing the witnesses. No notice was vouchsafed. The soldiers were refractory, and any complaint against them was obstruction. When a man fell ill, many neighbouring families were taken to the segregation camp, and left there without any covering to protect their bodies or any furniture, their property at home, including horses, cows, and sheep, being left unprotected. A man was unnecessarily taken to the hospital, and sent back as not being afflicted with plague, to find his furniture destroyed, and his poor wife and relatives forcibly removed and detained in the segregation camp. Temples were defiled by soldiers, and his own temple was entered by them on account, Natu believes, of his impertinence in making a complaint. An old man, who succeeded in satisfying the search party that he was not suffering from plague was detained in gaol some hours for having obstructed the search party, the obstruction apparently consisting in the delay caused by him. Insult was the reward for the services of volunteers, and their suggestions were treated with contumely. You all know how sensitive our Mahometan fellow-subjects are about the privacy of their women. And when Mr. Natu suggested that the services of Mahometan volunteers should be availed of to search the Mahometan quarter, he was told that his conduct was improper, and his services, voluntarily rendered, were dispensed with. Mr. Natu brought all this to the notice of the officials, pointed out that the operations were carried on against the spirit of the rules, and complained that there was a great amount of unrest. The Indian newspapers gave prominence to these and similar complaints. They compared the English Government to other governments, very much to the disadvantage of the former. *The Mahratta* complained, "Plague is more merciful to us than its human prototypes now reigning in the city. . . . The tyranny of the Plague Committee and its chosen instruments is yet too brutal to allow respectable people to breathe at ease." And it was added that "every one of these grievances may be proved to the hilt if His Excellency is pleased to inquire into the details." These representations were certainly entitled to attentive consideration, however much the authorities might have disagreed with them. Their objects were honest, their methods were proper. Their language was not respectful, it was perhaps violent; but men dominated by feelings of distress are often carried beyond what strict prudence would dictate. The violence seems to have been proportionate to the contempt with which the complaints were treated. But to the Indian mind the idea of creating a feeling of disaffection with a view to overthrow the English Government is simply ludicrous. Language which to a lawyer savoured perhaps of sedition was only intended by its violence to attract attention, and such language was only caused by the bitter feeling that milder representations by a race not so law-abiding as the Indians would have received immediate and careful attention. However, while these plague operations were being carried out, the President of the Plague Committee, to the horror and alarm of the native community, was murdered on what happened to be the Jubilee celebration day. To the Indian mind it was clear that this was nothing more than an unfortunate coincidence.

But its effect was very different in certain quarters. An Englishman in India is in a strange world; with his energy, practical will and ideas of freedom, he fails to understand, and perhaps despises a nation given up to metaphysical dreams which does not regard material prosperity as the great object of life. In other parts of the world under European sway, in Africa and America, an alliance with a European is eagerly sought, while in India, where also he is master, he is regarded by the castes as impure whose touch is pollution. With such differences in thought and feeling, no wonder that ordinary Englishmen ignore the people entirely and do not try to understand them. Hence their limited comprehension. Not knowing the native mind they exaggerate the importance of trifles which only ruffle the surface of native feeling, and attribute to certain events a significance which, however justifiable in England, do not even deserve a passing notice in India. The difficulties of English administration based on this misunderstanding are increased by misrepresentations. Labouring under this incapacity to discover the mental condition of the Indian masses, the Anglo-Indian papers are not generally safe guides. In times of excitement in particular, some of them prove positively mischievous.

Thus it is not a matter for surprise that a section of the Anglo-Indian Press discovered a deep design in the Poona murder. They found a pretext for the murder in the plague measures taken by Government. That the Native Press denounced such measures confirmed their suspicion. That the murder took place on the day of a great world-wide rejoicing proved to their satisfaction a deep-laid conspiracy which could have been planned only by educated cunning. Almost every incident that took place in Poona was pressed into the service to support this theory of conspiracy, and an attack was commenced on the Vernacular Press and the educated Indians, perhaps unexampled in its virulence since the Mutiny; a gagging act was loudly demanded, the policy of imparting education to the Indians was questioned, the press in England was worked, and the Europeans were thrown into a panic. The attack on the educated Indians and the Vernacular Press was brutal and cowardly. It was suggested as a matter for regret that the native mind had forgotten the lessons of the last mutiny, that a fresh mutiny would clear the air, particularly as the Mahrattas were not in the show of 1857. It was insisted that the Native Press was seditious and was responsible for the murder, and a section of the Anglo-Indian Press demanded the punishment, by name, of Mr. Tilak, the man who had strongly attacked and denounced the measures of Government. The unreasoning panic into which the Anglo-Indian community was driven by this malignant attack and its unfortunate success in inflaming the English public, forced, according to the English papers, the hands of the Secretary of State, and Lord Sandhurst had to take measures which, it is believed, he would never have sanctioned if he had remained a free agent. Ostensibly to discover the murderer, but acting on the theory that the murders were the result of a conspiracy for which the Vernacular Press was responsible, the Government arrested the Natu brothers under the provisions of an old law, intended for lawless times to secure the peace of the country. Mr. Tilak and the editors of two vernacular papers were prosecuted; and a punitive force was imposed on the Poona Municipality. The arrest of the Natu brothers was and must remain a great blunder. It recalls the worst days of irresponsible despotism. Liberty of person and property is a farce if you are liable to be arrested, imprisoned, and your property sequestered at the will and pleasure of Government without being brought to trial. We shall before we part, I have no doubt, express our emphatic protest against this proceeding.

The editor of one of the papers was tried by a judge without a jury and was convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment which can be explained only by the panic which seized the entire European community. Mr. Tilak was tried by a judge and a jury. A European—he need not even be a subject of the Empress—may claim to be tried by a jury of whom at least one-half shall be

Europeans. This is practically an efficient protection not only against the executive but against popular excitement. In the case of an Indian, the entire Anglo-Indian community may be most unreasonably and passionately prejudiced against him; he may be an object of violent antipathy to the other races; yet he cannot claim fair trial at the hands of his countrymen. He must submit to be quietly convicted after, it may be, the farce of a trial; for a trial seldom restrains men who are passionately excited, and the trial by jury—an institution intended for the protection of the prisoner in such circumstances—proves a delusion and a snare by depriving the prisoner of the right of appeal. Mr. Tilak, there can be scarcely any doubt, would have claimed a trial by jury of whom one half were Indians, if to the Indian the law allowed the same protection that it affords to the European. If there is any offence in India which ought to be tried by a native jury, it is the offence of sedition. It was possible that a native jury who knew the language and who were in a more favourable position to form a correct judgment of the probable and intended effect of the articles on native minds would not have convicted; it was certain that a European jury in that state of public excitement would convict. By exercising its right of challenge the prosecution was able to secure a jury of six Europeans—the number necessary to secure a conviction—and three Indians, and the verdict was naturally six to three. In a far stronger case tried by an experienced Chief Justice who had been trained in English courts, and retained the instincts of an Englishman, the Judge refused to accept the verdict of seven to two, when there was only one native on the jury. In prison these men, after conviction, have been treated as ordinary criminals. You are perhaps aware that, in England, a man convicted of sedition is not treated as an ordinary criminal, sedition being regarded a political offence; but in India apparently one is subject to the ordinary hardships of prison life.

This Poona incident enforces the necessity of ceaseless vigilance in keeping the English public correctly informed of whatever passes in India and of thus counteracting the mischievous effects of the dissemination of incorrect news. It emphasises the necessity of extending the system of trial by jury in India on the same conditions as it is granted to Europeans. It also shows that the Executive Government can deprive us of our liberty of person and property at its own will and pleasure. It has brought into disagreeable prominence the unsatisfactory nature of the law of sedition. The Government of India have announced their intention to alter such law in the light of recent events. We trust the Government will bear in mind that in the circumstances of this country, anything which checks freedom of public discussion is most deplorable. Such check may become a temporary, if dangerous bar to quiet and steady progress. The stream of our national progress will nevertheless move on. It will become dry only when our holy rivers of India become dry. Its progress at present under sympathetic guidance is smooth. Its unwise obstruction may compel underground passages or its overflow. It is a sad commentary on a century of British rule that a vernacular paper has had to close its office with these words: "It is no more now-a-days safe to conduct newspapers, hence we, who have other means of livelihood to support, make our exit, and do not feel any more necessity of attending the Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow to offer explanations for certain writings."

Though the Press prosecutions are over, the Government has not answered the question that will be asked by posterity, and that is being asked by India now. Was there any foundation for the complaints made by these various men, some of them honorably distinguished? Why have they been led to commit those acts which have now been declared to be offences? If they are not justified, if they cannot prove their allegations, they cannot be condemned too strongly; they will then have proved a curse to our country for the mischief they have committed. If, on the other hand, it was a righteous indignation for the sufferings of their countrymen that led them to gaol, it will be difficult to blame those who extend their sympathy to them.

We deprecate most strongly any intemperate language in criticising Government measures. We are bound to assume that any objectionable measure must have been due either to ignorance or to error of judgment. We have also to remember that, after all, our salvation lies in bringing home to the majority of the people of England our real wishes and feelings, and that the persons whose actions are criticised are their own kith and kin, that the system of Government we attack was framed by men for whom they feel just respect and esteem. Any violence, therefore, will do us infinite harm, it may possibly prevent us from securing a hearing. A false, incorrect, or even doubtful allegation will discredit us in the eyes of Englishmen, and the cause of reform may be thereby put back for generations.

Let me say at once that in the remarks I make, I deem it superfluous to proclaim our loyalty to the British throne or to the British constitution, or to add that we have not the slightest sympathy with any speech or writing which would regard a severance of our connexion as a desirable consummation. We naturally take a pride in the lives of the great men who have lived for India, and we would draw the attention of our rulers to that part of our ancient history which we think they might usefully study. But we are also aware that the present has its roots in the past and the past is responsible for our lowly condition. We who claim equality at the hands of Englishmen would deplore and resist any attempt to revive the days when any caste or class as such was privileged before the law—when a Brahmin, for instance, could claim immunity from punishment! We claim equality for all, Brahmins and Pariahs alike. It is this same feeling that prompts our criticism of any act on the part of our rulers which may seem to recognise any inequality. It is by the removal of these inequalities before law between European and Indian, and by the degree of self-government conceded to us, that [illegible]asure our progress towards freedom.

Gentlemen, I ha[illegible] I am afraid I have wearied you with my lengthy remarks, b[illegible] I have succeeded in placing before you clearly some point[illegible]o our present political condition. We have no need to des[illegible] political future so long as we depend upon Great Britain, [illegible] the same time be alive to our duties and responsibilities. India expects great things from us; the whole civilised world is watching the changes coming over us. Shall we be content to leave India as it is, or shall we go on and do all in our power to lift it to a higher level. Years of subjection, nay, we may even say servitude, have sapped the strength of the Indian nation, dwarfed its growth, and stripped it of all that was grand and noble in it, and if India is ever to occupy a better position than she fills at the present moment, and take her proper place in the scale of nations, it must be entirely due to the zealous efforts of her educated and enlightened sons. Let "*Nil desperandum*" be our motto; let not "insidious smile or angry frown" deter us from following the straight path of duty; and with the welfare and progress of our land as our end and aim, let us endeavour under a solemn sense of responsibility as well as loyalty to our country and to our Sovereign to bring about that glorious future which must inevitably crown our efforts.

MEMORIAL TO MR. W. C. RAND.

A memorial to the late Mr. Walter Charles Rand, of the Indian Civil Service, who was assassinated at Poona, last summer, was unveiled at St. Peter's Church, Lordship Lane, London, on Saturday afternoon, January 30, by Mr. H. M. Birdwood (formerly a member of the Governor's Council, Bombay). The memorial is situated at the west end of the church, and consists of a mural tablet of alabaster, with a brass plate bearing the following inscriptions:—"Erected by friends and parishioners in memory of Walter Charles Rand, of the Indian Civil Service, eldest son of John Rand, F.R.C.S., of this parish. In February, 1897, he was appointed Special Commissioner for the suppression of the plague at Poona, where, after faithfully discharging his duty, he was treacherously shot when returning from the Governor's reception on the day of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and died of the wound on 3rd July following, aged 34 years." "For the past four months Mr. Rand has laboured with devotion and success to free the city of Poona from the plague. He has merited the esteem of all the inhabitants of that city, and in him his Excellency the Governor in Council feels that he loses a tried and valuable officer.—*Bombay Government Gazette.*" "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Among those present were Sir Raymond West, Sir M. Bhownaggree, M.P., Sir Lionel Ashbourne, Dr. Rand, Sir G. Birdwood, Messrs. F. Burles, B. Rand, and A. Rogers. During the service the choir sang the anthem, "Blessed are the departed," and at its conclusion the Rev. H. J. Pulley delivered a brief address.

Mr. Birdwood unveiled the memorial, and in doing so said in his short life Mr. Rand was called upon to deal with affairs of public moment and peculiar difficulty. They would not be true to themselves, their faith, and their country if they allowed any black cloud of sorrow to dim the brightness of the fact that Mr. Rand, serving his Queen and country in a distant land, was always true to his early training and to the best traditions of that public service to which he belonged. It could not be gainsaid that England was mindful of the welfare of the people of India, and those whom she sent there were faithful exponents of her beneficent and protecting care. While he made the best possible use of the intellectual opportunities offered him by Dulwich and by Balliol, Mr. Rand at the same time acquired an earnestness of purpose and strength of character which eminently fitted him for the responsibilities of Indian official life, and especially for the difficult duties of Plague Commissioner in Poona at a time of peculiar perplexity and trouble. On the evidence of those who saw his work in India from day to day, they knew that he organised with admirable skill measures for the repression of the plague, and he carried out those measures, in the face of ignorant opposition, with calmness and firmness, with consideration for the poor sufferers and their relatives. He was a man who went about his work with unselfish devotion to the good of others. No thought of danger would have deterred him from the path of duty, any more than the sad circumstances of his death would deter others like-minded with him from following in his footsteps. They could not doubt that the expressions of sympathy received from all parts of the Bombay Presidency were spontaneous indications of an appreciation of British rule.

Mr. Meade, the Chairman of the Committee of subscribers, thanked all those who had facilitated the erection of the memorial, and the proceedings concluded.

Mr. B. K. Acharyya has passed the Final Examination of the University of Edinburgh for LL.B. with First Class Honours. He was Prizeman in Political Economy and Mercantile Law, and took Honours in General Jurisprudence and Private International Law.

An evening party was given last Saturday at the St. James's Hall Restaurant by the friends of Mr. Ahmed Hassan (Barrister-at-Law) on the occasion of his departure to India. A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present, among them being Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. and Mrs. Arathoon, Miss Manning, Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, M.P., Mr. H. S. Khalil, Mr. and Mrs. Aublet, Mr. Balwant Singh, Syed Ali Karine, Dr. S. Mullick, Mr. B. L. Kaul, Sirdar H. B. Singh, Mr. Graham, Mrs. Chapman, Mr. Martin Wood, Miss Peach, Mr. and Mrs. Hassan Ali, Bhai Gurhukhsh Singh Giani, Sayed Ameer, Miss Leslie, and Mr. Sevak Ram. The party was a great success. There were Indian songs and an Indian sword-dance.

The P. and O. s.s. "Clyde," leaving Marseilles on [illegible] (for Alexandria and Malta) has booked among ot[illegible] the following:—Sir W. and Lady Eden; Prin[illegible] Dhuleep Singh; Lady Gorst; Lord and Lad[illegible] and the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon.

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